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from

The Jew,

To Dr. Will

unpublished

MY
OLD NOTE BOOK
IN PRINT.

BY

JOHN M. DENIG.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.
COLUMBUS, OHIO.
1861.

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TO E. B. ARMSTRONG Esq.

DEAR JEW,

Having been solicited by a number of my friends, to publish the contents of "MY OLD NOTE BOOK," I have done so for their especial benefit, use and abuse.

As for the contents of the volume, they are a true copy of the original manuscript; without alteration or amendment to suit the prejudices of any person, party, denomination or sect, and as I have written for neither money nor popularity, I feel superlatively indifferent about either the praise, or censure of the reader.

To you, as an old and cherished friend, as the companion of many of my happiest hours, as an estimable and respected fellow citizen; and as a gentleman of poetic talent, of literary merit and high appreciative ability, permit me to dedicate this little volume.

JOHN M. DENIG.

COLUMBUS, O. 1861.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Number One.

M' Connellsburg, Oct. 1842.

Brothers—A——and E——

You doubtless remember the promises which I gave in my last, to write you a long letter by your mother. When I penned that promise I had the prospects of several weeks to do it in. But as she has rather suddenly taken a notion to return home, I cannot possibly in the time left to me, write such a letter as I intended. However if a few particulars of a humorous nature will be any compensation for the disappointment you have sustained, I will freely give them.

Materials for the manufacturing of entertaining narrations, are vastly scarce here: verily there is not enough of news afloat to keep the hinges of the gossips' jaws from rusting, and if such a peaceful state of affairs long continues to exist, I fear that the chin of the old women will begin to sprout forth that bristly luxuriance, the growth of which ever since the creation, has been prevented, by the never ceasing motion of this lower half of the vent of the patent slan-

der manufactory. Every lover of slang will deeply sympathize with those circulators of doubtful intelligence for the distressing insufficiency of interesting personalities—the number of ill-contracted marriages and illegitimate births has of late years so remarkably diminished, as to render the epitome of scurrilous interchanges almost as irksome as the figured statistical and geological pages of a Canal Commissioner's report.

I must now slide from the general to the particular. The peculiarly affecting nature of the following narration requires that this subject be set forth in language which will not cause too lively an excitation of the sympathetic passions, for an unvarnished and unimbellished simple relation of this melancholy incident, is sufficient to overwhelm the mind of any one who is not callous to all the softer emotions of human nature.

To commence. Sometime in the early part of the past summer, when, although the days were stretched to their utmost extent, our dinner continued to be one of those equivocal meals that are made subservient to washing, scrubbing, ironing, visiting, &c.

The certainty and uncertainty of this very necessary part of corporeal replenishing being regulated by such an innumerable host of disagreeable contingencies, gives us in general but little hope of enjoying this great dietetical event of the day.

On a day of this kind above described, a late

breakfast had prepared our stomachs to fast for an early supper. The dining hour of high noon arrived and although the merry bells around, rang joyful news for the empty bellies and rumbling bowels of every herring-gutted journeyman and half-starved apprentice, yet we were destined to await in dull expectancy the tardy hour of supper, which seemed to glimmer in the dim distance of futurity, scarcely visible through the interminable avenue, into which, hunger had manufactured the intervening hours.

The wheels of time rolled slowly and heavily along until they brought us within hoping distance of the important period. At this time while R——t, myself and our *sub*, were all in the store waiting with painful anxiety, expecting every moment to be called to a sumptuous repast. Various noises were heard underneath us in the *spring house*, such as the rattling of dishes, uncovering and recovering of bread barrels, the shipping and replacing of crock-lids, &c. The general impression was that due preparations for the evening meal were going on below, and moreover the whole of us being pretty well versed in the *diagnosis* of meal-getting, came to the conclusion from the symptoms manifested, that something more than ordinary, such as waffles, fritters, pancakes, or something else of the batter kind was to be expected.

The aforesaid noises continuing for some considerable length of time, we began to entertain sundry various doubts respecting the probable cause of the

sounds under consideration. Accordingly a *committee of one* was appointed, duly and legally authorized and empowered to make a thorough investigation, both as to the nature of this subteraneous commotion and what were the prospects of a relief from that intolerable acuteness of gnawing hunger, to which our appetites had now been whetted. The committee forthwith proceeded below, when awful to relate an old sow, one of those outrageous, invincible and *piratical* prowlers and depredators on the property of peaceful citizens, had entered the spring-house and upset twelve crocks of milk, eaten two rolls of butter, and the only loaf of bread.

When discovered the four-footed offender was standing knee deep in milk, her head smeared over with butter, and her snout buried up to her eyes in a crock of yeast.

The indignant shout of the now assembled household aroused the plunderer to a sense of her danger, and with a terrible unearthly grunt she bounded over a pickle-jar, through a bread-basket of eggs, knocked over a churnful of butter-milk and rushed out of the door amidst a dreadful shower of brickbats, ladles, shovels, broom handles, candle sticks, and all other kind of domestic weapons that the enraged household in the haste of their wrath could bring to the unequalled combat.

Immediately after the expulsion of the transgres-

sor, the house-maid proceeded to restore the heterogeneous mass of crockery and culinary to some sort of order, which consumed the remainder of the evening. Bread was sent for to the bakers', but it was not until the village windows were lit up from the tallow luminaries within, that our sinking spirits were revived by the substantials of a hearty supper. Never have I undergone such a fast since the truant hollidays, and fishing Saturdays of boyhood.

Now my dear fellows this must suffice for the present. Don't forget to write a long letter to me the first opportunity. Remember I shall take no excuses. In the mean time I remain that warm hearted brother who has ever had your welfare dear to his bosom. Adieu.

JOHN.

P. S. Enclosed I send you a few verses which I have composed for the benefit of the fair sex; to whom I intend to exhibit them as fast as I make their acquaintance.

The Victoria Bonnet.

Ye daughters of Columbia fair,
Blush when you read this sonnet;
To see your follies censured here
In the Victoria Bonnet.

Now ever since the British Queen
Has set upon the throne,
The wildest fashions have been seen,
That fashion e'er has shown.

These fashions are as various quite,
As fashions of all nations;
Yet we are told they're all the height,
Of the Victoria fashions.

Victoria hats both lined and faced,
With rich Victoria lining
Spangled with, (though of cheaper cost)
Victoria jewels shining.

Our streets thronged with Victoria muffs,
Victoria hoods and wrappers;
Victoria sleeves, Victoria cuffs
Cutting victorious capers.

Shoulders hung with Victoria capes,
That steamship late brought word of
Cut into fifty thousand shapes
Victoria never heard of.

Victoria shoes our pavements graced,
Till fashion came still later;
The ankle then was quickly cased,
In the Victoria gaiter.

The fashion next you may suppose
To be a kind of starter,
But truth; twas of her under clothes,
Down to her very garter.

The bosoms fair, were tightly cased
In the Victoria jacket,
Stiff with Victoria stays twas braced,
With eyelet holes to back it.

The fashion next our ladies wore,
Though they were seldom seen in,
Victoria shifts trimmed down before,
Made of Victoria linen.

But of all fashions of the day,
There's none depend upon it,
That had such universal sway,
As the Victoria bonnet.

Its history thus briefly stands,
A milliner in Boston
A stock of bonnets had on hands,
Which she could not get cost on.

She saw the follies of the age,
For twas of sense a scant age,
And studied well the foolish rage,
To turn it to advantage.

She cut and trimmed these bonnets old,
And clapt Victoria's name on,
Then placed them in her windows bold,
As fashion latest came on.

The thing soon took, and very well,
In truth twas not a bad one,
In three days every city belle
Who could afford one had one.

The news soon reached each country town,
Many the bonnets went for,
And all who could not travel down,
The pattern quickly sent for.

Old bonnets ripped inside and out,
Bestrewed each work room table,
Mammas and daughters bustle about,
Engaged in glorious gabble.

In sorting ribbons new and bright,
The little country ladies,
Employed their mammas day and night,
And sorely grieved their daddies.

The milk maid walked with measured tread,
And careful crossed the gutter,
While calculations filled her head,
How she should sell her butter,

It all engrossed her humble mind,
The bonnet's late improvement,
For fear that she'd be left behind,
The fashion's latest movement.

Nor was her troubled head at ease,
Till industry had won it,
And placed her butter and her cheese,
In other shape upon it.

Nor did the giddy current stop,
But still was seen to wash on,
Till ev'ry negro wenches' top
Was bonneted in fashion.

Just at this time, (and sure none but
The milliners could wish so)
The genuine Victoria cut,
Came over ex-officio.

Oh what a panic it did strike,
And what a dire dismay twas,
The patterns were no more alike
Than oysters and potatoes.

Now quickly matron, maid, and wife,
Incensed to quite a fury,
Sought in a mob this milliners' life,
Without a judge or jury,

But she who was the guilty cause
Of all this public flurry,
Soon found out what their object was,
And fled in quite a hurry.

So when the raging mob came up,
Hot with their vengeance hissing,
They smashed the door, rushed in the shop,
But found the keeper missing.

But now so high their wrath did burn,
That nought on earth could hinder;
They tore the shop from stem to stern,
And burnt it to a cinder.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Number Two.



M' Connellsburg, Aug. 25, 1843.

Dear Brother E——

Again I commence another epistle dictated to your edification; but I fear I shall fall short of making it conserve to that end.

In your last you seemed to think that I should write to you more frequently and spin longer yarns. This, my dear fellow takes more time than I can spare. I have business duties which takes three-fourths of my time and studies, which consume the remaining fourth; but, I am willing to share the latter portion in corresponding with my beloved friends.

Things are progressing in this quarter of the earth pretty much as usual, with the exception of the ordinary changes which the stream of time in its mighty course brings to the shores of mortals.

Attendant materials for deep cogitation exists around us, especially in the '*productive*' part of the world.

Here I see those who a few years since were my companions in the village school, now grown up to manhood, coupled themselves to some buxom lass

and in a few years surrounded with a bare-footed progeny of some half-dozen of squallers, often mis-called blessings.

'Tis then that the romance of dreamy visions gives place to *stern* realities; the murmuring of running brooks, to the crying of hungry children, and the voluptuous bewitchery of fairy tales to the washing and mending of dirty shirt tails.

Many sage conclusions may be drawn by a contemplation of these matters, and which may in the event prove to be of much utility as many truths much more scientific.

I hope you are still engaged in your literary pursuits, and in storing your mind with useful knowledge. That by this time your habits of study are so completely formed as to render application, a matter of choice with you.

Je n'ai pas le temps ou je vous ecrirais une lettre francais, mais il faut que vous attende jusqu'a ce que j'aurais plus du temps. Je viens d'ecrire une lettre Latine a'mon frere George. C'est une chose beaucoup plus difficile que d'ecrire une francais.

L'epouse de Jason Harb, mit du monde deux enfants quatre mois apres leur hymenee'. Il ne voudrait pas vivre aupres elle et ils obligeaient de partir. Il me semble qu'il n'est pas le pere de les enfants.

Vraiment, c'est une chose curieux. Qu'en pensez-vous?

Translate this for the rest of the family.

Translation of the above paragraph.

“Jason Harb’s wife gave birth to a pair of twins, only four months after their marriage, consequently Mr. Harb would not live with her, and they parted.

It created some considerable talk here for a few days, but the great current of human affairs has swept over it, and now it has faded into dim obscurity, ceased to occupy the attention of even the most idle curious.

Business affairs are in a pretty prosperous condition with us, we are still doing our share.

I will now conclude, but I can scarcely dignify this hasty scrawl with the name of a letter; but my dear E——, I give you as usual a promise, that if I can gather materials sufficient I will send you some *longæ ambages* the next time. In the mean time I remain your affectionate brother.

JOHN.

P. S. As I sat yesterday looking at the workmen engaged in erecting a new building nearly opposite, my thoughts took a dreamy poetical turn, and gradually worked themselves into the following

PARODY.

Past my door the dust was drifting—
 For an Irishman was sifting
 Lime and sand upon the street;
 Ever and anon the paddy,
 And indeed good reason had he,
 Wiped his brow, oppressed with heat.

Yes, the sun was very searching,
For its rays were hot and scorching,
Blinding with its light his eye,
Ev'ry minute he was drenching,
Lips and throat in hopes of quenching
Thirst, and yet he still was dry.

The day was windy too, and dusty,
Filled his eyes with sand, yet must he
Labor till the hours went by,
And a Dutchman too was whiling
Time, for he was slowly piling
Brick in piles, some ten feet high.

And a nigger there was sweating,
Streams which every rag was wetting,
Underneath a heavy hod—
Painfully his back was bending,
While with tottering footsteps wending,
Up the ladders steep he trod.

On the wall the trowel was clinking,
And the mason there was thinking,
Of long hours not yet begun,
Oft impatiently was gazing
On the sky where fiercely blazing,
Stood that torrid noonday sun.

All were sick with water drinking,
Yet with thirst they all were sinking,
But they feared to drink it more—
For the burning thirst that followed,
Ev'ry freezing draught they swallowed,
Made them fainter than before.

My heart was now with sadness quickened,
To see the sons of toil thus sickened,
When I knew relief was nigh;
I had abundant means to save them,
So I called them in and gave them
Each a horn of good Old Rye.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Number Three.



M' Connellsburg, 1844.

Brothers—A——and E——

According to my promise I set myself about the laborious task of writing you a long letter. And in order to diminish the labor on my part, to avoid repetition, and save time, I dictate the epistle to both of you.

When I think how much I have to write, and heap together in my own mind the scanty materials, from which I have to spin a *yarn* of words and weave a web of variegated expressions, I cannot but exclaim *O, quid mihi oportet facere ut perficium tantum laborum.* O that I had a mental kaleidoscope into which I might cast my little stock of ideas, and shake them

into a thousand various forms, which might express perhaps more than I shall be able to make them do with all my intellectual efforts at their arrangement. But as the march of invention has not proceeded far enough to make this resource available, I must be contented with tardy and laborious nature.

It is time now that I should broach the subject matter of the correspondence, and in doing so, instead of going back as far as the creation (as is usually the case of great historians,) I shall go no further back than the *flood*; of which I have promised to give you an account of:

“The Cronological data of this remarkable event is fixed on Wednesday, the 6th, and Friday the 15th of September 1843. On the first occasion, after previous wet weather, of some ten or twelve days, and a subsequent thundergust of six or eight hours, the peaceful slumbers of the inhabitants of our little village were broken, by the rushing of the mighty waters, and they speedily left their chambers to save the floating contents of their cellars, spring-houses, &c., but the waters soon abated, and after some washing and scrubbing (which was most probably needed at all events,) every thing was restored to order and cleanliness.

But alas! there was no one here skilled in omens, like Mentor, we could have foretold another reflux. The portals of the heavens opened, and from thence decended a shower unprecedented, and one of the most disastrous floods in the memory of every one

except Old Jimmy Agnew, took place. The earth having been soaked by continual rains, to a state of supersaturation, ceased to absorb the torrents which incessantly poured from the heavens and the consequences was that every gutter became a creek, and every brook a mighty river.

Although we had been warned by the former flood, and readmonished by a whole day's rain without intermission—although we had previously retired for the night, placed every thing above high water-mark, yet in the solemn stillness of the third watch of the reign of darkness, the watery element—the noise of mingled voices—the rattling of buckets and the tread of heavy heeled boots—all were heard. In most precipitate haste to get our forked ends into our clothes, we groped about for matches and candles, rammed our legs into our coat sleeves, drew our pantaloons over our heads, hopped about hunting odd stockings and scattered boots, until we had our bodies covered in some manner, not being particular as to pinning on collars and adjusting cravats.

By this time the whole neighborhood was in a state of alarm and confusion; torches were seen flitting through the houses, and lanterns flying through the streets, men were hallooing, women screaming, boys laughing, children crying, dogs barking, and doors slamming, all in such a frightful chorus as could only be equaled by the midnight sacking of a stormed city.

Our first move was for the spring-house, but here,

the water had risen, so as to preclude all possibility of entrance, and all we could do, was to stand and look at tubs sailing round in all the majesty of seventy-four gun ships, riding contemptuously over milk and butter crocks long since buried in the raging deep. The only vessel that appeared to labor with the surge, was the *pickle tub*, and bad as we may imagine the *pickle* within, the *tub* was in a worse *pickle* than its contents. Long it struggled with the tide two inches from its top, until finally it sailed out of the door and we succeeded in extricating it from its perilous situation.

We next proceeded to the cellar; and here a most terrible scene of submersion presented itself. The water had risen to the height of three feet, and every thing within, that was able to swim, was pitching and tumbling about, creating a universal compound mixture of Dye-stuffs, Paints, Oils, Varnishes and Spices.

The Blacking looked *pale* with fright, and the Whiting as *blue* as the Blacking. The Epsom Salts shed *tears* at its approaching *dissolution*, and even bottles on the upper shelves, with their *mouths sealed* in dumb silence, trembled for their safety.

We immediately entered, and with a lantern in one hand, a steering oar in the other, boated round in boxes, and a *stradle* of barrels, with our legs doubled up, and our bodies bent at an angle of twenty-two and a half degrees with the surface to keep our heads

from bumping against the joists. After a great deal of fishing and sundry duckings, we got all things out that was possible, and left the remainder to their fate.

By the time we had this accomplished day-light appeared, and we hurried to see how our neighbors were faring, and whether they or any of their effects were missing.

The streets presented a scene of general excitement and commotion. All the inhabitants were on the move, running, carrying in mud and carrying out benches, tables and cupboards, upsetting crocks, breaking plates, scattering knives, forks and spoons. Owing to the drift-wood and other obstructions the water accumulated in Agnew's garden, until with a crash it swept away the whole fence, rushing down, burried Davidson's tan-yard four feet under water.

More on account of *its* specific gravity than any change in market, *leather rose rapidly*; so much so, that in five minutes all the contents of the vats became *floating capital*. All hands snatched up rakes, hooks, hoop poles, and every available instrument and hastened to the rescue. Elias himself, up to his arm-pits in the water, commanded in person, and with the skill of a practiced pilot, steered packs of hides into the bark-shed behind the chicken-coop, and on top of the hog pen or wherever they might anchor in safety until the ebbing of the tide.

Shoemakers, tailors, tanners, saddlers, and cob-

blers with their coats off, and their pantaloons rolled up, might be seen under the porches, arches, and bridges, with hooks and grapples, dragging out the half-tanned skins, swept down by the destructive torrent. As far as I could learn, the damage in the upper part of the town, was confined principally to the fences, besides carrying off sundry wash-tubs, ash-buckets, horse-buckets, and other little *domestic* vessels of a different *shape* and *material*, which are often seen basking in the sun along the sides of the *brook*, like Alligators in the swamps of Florida.

In order to favor the administration of a specific against the effects of so much cold water, or a countervail against rheumatisms, pleurisies, and internal congestions, a suspension of the Temperance Pledge took place, *pro. tem.*, and non-members, lay-members, and officers gulped down brandy, wine, gin, whiskey or cider, without scruple as to quantity, or inquiry as to quality, and in most submissive obedience to the old rule "*de gustibus non est disputandum.*"

To sum up and balance the whole. I believe that the flood was rather a benefit than an injury, for notwithstanding some individual losses, it cleaned all the pigsties, drowned all the rats and roaches in the cellar kitchens and subterraneous wash-houses and swept away the accumulated filth of forty generations. Such is the history of this great flood.

There has been a great number of weddings du-

ring the past winter. Some for comfort, some for convenience, a few for love, but none for money.

I am not able to assign any local or general cause for this sudden ebullition of the uxorious passion. I would give you a list if possible in detail, of those successful candidates for matrimonial felicity, and accompany it with copious and minute speculative comments on the judicious or injudicious selections of the respective novices in this most difficult, responsible and interminable undertaking; and would offer innumerable suggestions and conjectures on the probable happiness or misery of the several hymenial copartnerships; but *de omnibus longum est dicere*.

The spring has now opened; the great season for settling and collecting accounts. Money is out of the question. Settlements have to pass for payments, and due-bills for bank bills. The magistrate's dockets are crowded with judgements. Tenements, horses, cattle and furniture pass under the merciless hammer of the sheriff. The broad rimmed beaver of a big-bellied methodist preacher does not produce greater dismay among the barn-yard fowls, than the low-crowned white hat of John Smith the constable, strikes into state offenders and delinquent debtors; alas, for the poor culprit before whom he takes it off; for all the evils of Pandora's Box are trifling annoyances when compared to the contents of this receptacle of legal terrors. Tossed by the slightest wind,

out spring summonses, capias, warrants, subpoenas, and executions, big with the fearful terms of the voluminous law, with signs, seals, and superscriptions enough to frighten the most innocent conscience, or intimidate the most incorrigible miscreant. It seems hard, but it is the *ultima ratio creditorum*.

The Temperance cause in this section of the country is rather in a state of incipient dilapidation. New members are scarce, meetings rare, and thinly attended. It is more than probable that the political excitement of the approaching campaign, will so effectually absorb all others, and by the time of its conclusion the cold water association will be dissipated in the invisible intangible humidity of aqueous vaporization, as if it had undergone double elementary decomposition, and supervenient destructive distillation.

We still have a good many drunkards, who seem to drink harder every day. The most extreme case of degradation which I see in our town is Bill Cull. He is so perfectly saturated with alcohol as to be almost in a state of fluidity; and indeed it is a wonder to me that the solvent power of the fluids does not overcome the chemical affinity and cohesive attraction of the solids, and reduce him to a state of liquidity. He appears to be in a state of perfect incandescence, and looks as if he had sat upon a pile of red-hot charcoal, under the oxy-hydrogen blow-pipe for the last ten years. He seems to have arrived at the

perihelion of the orbit of drunkenness; and to tell whether he will make an other revolution around the alcoholic sun of his existence or fly off at a tangent into the regions of destruction is beyond the power of human divination.

James still retains his remarkable predilection for the canine species. Last summer he had a dog which was worthless to a maximum, and was a standing source of annoyance to the whole neighborhood; he entered at all hours, without previous intimation of his approach, and retreated with the same degree of taciturnity, carrying with him whatever he could discover in the shape of victualling material, not being particularly inquisitive whether it was sufficiently cooked to be of easy digestion. Luckily he was soon stolen, and the community was rid of his depredations.

This spring in order as far as possible to supply the loss of this valuable personage, he has procured a little ragged, matted and woolly-haired apology for a dog, of a dirty white color, the fac simile of one of old Fordley's *christmas sheep*, made out of a piece of clay, four sticks, and a handful of cotton. He is perfectly harmless in all respects excepting his *odoriferous qualities*, which render his proximity as offensive to the olfactory sensibilities, as the contaminated atmosphere of a menagerie.

But the most important addition that we have to our family circle, is one of the double-flued, fuel-sa-

ving, self-heating, rarifying, revolving, electrical, atmospheric Hathaway cooking-stoves. It is furnished with nine sliding grates, a wash-kettle, twelve boilers twenty-six pair of doors, and seventeen grid-dles.

There is a place in front to broil beef, toast bread, boil eggs, dry stockings and diapers, and brown coffee. Behind are two ovens and a blacksmith's shop, and underneath a place to warm bread, scald hogs, raise cabbage plants and hatch chickens. It occupies but little room, takes no wood, keeps the kitchen warm in winter and cool in summer, beautifies the complexion of the cook, burns the dog, minds the children besides keeping in motion a small engine to churn butter and rock the cradle.

The general routine of the medical practice in this section is the same as formerly, dark nights, muddy roads and long rides. Occasionally our whole household is roused up at midnight by the knocking, kicking and hammering all round the house to the no little discomfiture of the dogs and disturbance of the neighbors, by a messenger with an express of double quick haste, for the doctor to go away over the ridges, some twenty eight or thirty miles into the unexplored regions of the Malotts, Sipeses and Clevingers. 'Tis then that we see those relics of former ages, the imperishable, impermeatable, indestructible great drab overcoats, with a standing collar two inches thick, a hook and chain at the neck, a belt

round the middle, and shingled with thirteen folds of capes, three feet long, and four inches to the weather. These have descended as true heir-looms of antiquity, from father to son for at least sixty generations, each succeeding link in the genealogical descent, giving them an additional coating of molasses, grease, apple-butter and dirt, until they have become impervious to rain, sleet, wind or snow, and all other kinds of weather; thundergusts, tornadoes and earthquakes not excepted. To see one of the long-sided, hollow-bellied, buckwheat-starved, seven-tooters of the Brush Creek nation, buttoned and belted up to the throat in one of these wearless, tearless and fearless ramparts of resistance, looks as ancient as one of the patriarchal shepherds of Judea, as colossal as the statue of Jupiter Ammon in the Lybian desert, and presents a perfect consolidation of impregnability.

The next item which comes under notice is the liberal spirit of inquiry and the free circulation of rumors by which our intelligence is characterized. We have an intellectual ubiquitary sagacity of discovery, for with incredible quickness the most private transactions become matters for common and public speculation. We pry into account books, ascertain individual liabilities, and note down correctly the dates of marriage contracts, to avoid unpleasant mistakes in the calculation of *subsequent events*. Among us it is useless to borrow plates, glasses or chairs for an evening party; for we are well acquainted with their price, quality, nativity and all other circum-

stances connected with their possession. 'Tis folly to color old gowns into new ones; for we are as well acquainted with their patches, rents, and seams, as with the wrinkles in the faces of our aged grandmothers.

We are so acute in our observation, that a pair of striped pantaloons soon become identical with the owner, and in vain are they brought forth for new, after three or four years retiracy in an old chest with tobacco leaves. We know them immediately; and there is not an individual among us from the child to the dotard who would not recognize them as an old acquaintance; whether in the crowded streets of London, on the banks of the river Nile, or hanging wrong side out on a tree-top in Robinson Crusoe's Island.

There was more than the usual travelling through here during the winter. But since the other channels of communication are open, there are rare interruptions to the quiet monotony of our peaceful placidity. The children make play-houses and the whip-poor-wills build nests in the streets. The sight of a travelling equipage produces quite a sensation. Chambermaids stick their heads out of windows, matrons run to the doors, and dirty-faced children into the houses. Hogs start up with a grunt, geese hiss at the horses, dogs bark at the wheels, and ducks, chickens and turkeys run under the porches.

In am here compelled by a very unpleasant defi-

ciency in the *quantum temporis*, to draw this heterogeneous juxtaposition of dissimilar paragraphical contexts to a conclusion. I would gladly give you an interesting account of our little domestic peculiarities. How the children romp, how the baby cries, and how rarely we get dinner on washing-days. How cross the women are on Saturdays; and how pious on Sundays. What glorious recreations we have cleaning stove-pipes, digging potatoes and shaking carpets, but I must deny myself the exquisite gratification of treating these subjects for the present; for besides the urgencies of negocial transactions, I am subjected to the pressing necessity of weather-boarding the posterior projectional convexities of two pair of old pantaloons, of retailing the nether extremity of a veteran shirt, and sewing new heels on to about twenty pair of old stockings.

Adieu my dear brothers, may you never have to go without your breakfast and have sourkrout for dinner, and mush and milk for supper, is the earnest, uppermost wish of your affectionate brother.

JOHN.

P. S. Some time since I was invited to an evening party where I passed a very pleasant time, partaking freely of the abundance of good things customary on such occasions.

The entertainment was honored with the sacred and august presence of three ministers of the gospel, one of whom asked a very eloquent blessing upon

the savory viands, which probably caused me to indulge more freely than I otherwise should have done. With a cart-load of some ten or twelve courses in my digestive bread basket at a very late hour, I rolled into bed, but, instead of sleeping, was engaged most of the night in combatting with the fearful phantoms of the following horrible dream, which on the next day I ground out in the following parody.

The Glutton's Dream.

My thoughts on awful subjects roll,
On cakes and pies and bread,
What horrors seize the glutton's soul,
Whilst lying in his bed.

There with his stomach crowded full,
In torments he must lay,
Ten thousand devils seem to pull
Him each a different way.

Each swallowed oyster seems to take
The form of some damned ghost,
And then he dreams that he's a steak,
Stuck in Hell's fire to roast.

With glaring eyes a turkey there,
In red hot gravy rolls,
And roasting pigs with burning legs,
Walk through the fiery coals.

All round he sees a dreary wall,
Of scorched and blackened toast,
And boiling lobsters o'er him crawl,
A seething writhing host.

In Hell's hot smoky kitchen there,
Forever he must stay!
The *breakfast* bell resounds through Hell,
He wakes, and lo! 'tis day.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Number Four.

THE POST OFFICE—BLUNDERING P. O. SEEKERS—
PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS—CHAOS—HORTICULTURE—
POTATO SPECULATION—SYRUP OF GRAPES—BERKS
COUNTY WHITE PUDDING—MINCE PIES—ECONOM-
ICAL CRANBERRY TARTS—FAT BACON FOR BREAK-
FAST—SCABBIES INFERNALS—HOW TO LEARN GER-
MAN—THE CRIMINAL—THE VERDICT.

M' Connellsburg, 1846.

Brothers—A——and E——

I have for some months past purposed giving you a short epistle this summer; as I have one whole rainy Sunday before me, I will venture once more to give you a few leaves of my note book, as copiously written out as words can be piled upon one another to obscure ideas.

You will certainly not enjoin it upon me to go back two or three years and bring up the history of M' Connellsburg, for the various threads of detail, have be-

come so interwoven, twisted, and broken, that, for any one person, the labor would be impossible to perform. Fragments, observations, and speculations, are all you must expect, and if you can combine them so as to make a congruous whole, you are welcome to all the credit of such an ingenious performance.

The most important change which has taken place in the internal affairs of the town, is the removal of the Post Office; which happened last April. This honorable and profitable incumbency fell into the hands of J. C. Fetter. I believe there was no general mark of dissatisfaction at this succession, business men were satisfied if their business was done correctly, and said nothing, but those who sent an occasional letter or paper, and whose postage would amount to twenty-five cents a year, expressed considerable disapprobation, and those who had no business at all, and for whom the office might as well be in Hindoostan, grumbled like four ounces of Castor Oil, swallowed down on the top of a quart of chestnuts and a dozen of rambow apples. But these murmurings soon settled into a kind of chronic submission, and at the present time there is no opposition manifested.

The office was at first kept in the room which nigger Spuggs formerly occupied as a barber shop, the entrance to which, you will recollect is about half way down the alley. The people of the town were soon all acquainted with its whereabouts; but it took

the country folks some considerable length of time to discover its retreat. Some of them, in search of it would come into the store, some through the entry east of the store, some into Forbes' shoe shop, others into Mrs. Needum's millinery establishment; and one fellow had such astonishing perseverance to blunder away round into our kitchen and ask if there was any letters for Ambrosier Woodlump, at the lower end of Pigeon Cove. The resident powers of the kitchen were so exasperated at his unparralled stupidity, as to be almost on the point of making him *feel* sensible of his mistake by demonstrations performed with the broomstick, rolling-pin, gridiron or some other direful instrument of kitchen warfare; but as he had sufficient sagacity to make good his retreat without loss of time, he was suffered to depart through nothing worse than a thunder-gust of eye-brows. He backed out through the yard; but not without looking two or three times under the bake-oven, strongly suspecting that the office was kept in the basement story. But these difficulties now no longer exist; for, a short time ago the office was moved into the front room, where five feet square boarded up in one corner, with a door in the end, a square hole in front, and strips up to the ceiling like a chicken-coop, incarcerates the governmental documentary pigeon boxes; and as long as the worthy incumbent can squeeze himself into these narrow confines, we have conclusive evidence that he has not fattened on the spoils of office.

The only public improvement that has been made for many years, is the filling up and turn-piking of the street leading to the Brick Church. This was performed about one year ago. A tax was laid on the borough with the liberty of working it out either per se, or by substitute. All the carts, wheelbarrows, mattocks, shovels, spades and grubbing-hoes in town were put in active service; all the dirt, stones, shavings, and tan that could be raked and scraped, were hauled up and deposited in the gutters, in the best possible situation to be washed down into the run by the first rain. The rattling and cracking of stone-hammers could be heard for miles. The rumbling of carts, and the trampling of horses, made a din equal to the roar of drays which is heard upon the wharves of the Atlantic sea ports. The work was pushed with most astonishing vigor, nor need this seem strange, when you are told that the number of those who had nothing to do but to see matters go on right, was twelve supervisors, eighteen superintendants, nine overseers, six street commissioners, and three high constables; besides the burgess, the town council and twelve superannuated citizens. A few more might have been brought into service, but these were considered sufficient to command a force of one Frenchman, four Dutchmen, five apprentice boys and two niggers.

The improvement has added considerably to the appearance of this street, but in other respects, the

town still retains its ancient appearance, Main street is beautifully diversified with store boxes and wood piles. Greathead occupies the north end of Pipe street with his board-yard. I believe he has so shut it up that it is not navigable for any craft larger than a wheel-barrow; and the south end, up by Mr. Keyser's, contains a most formidable chaotic labyrinth of ploughs, wagons, wood-ladders, hay-ladders, wagon-beds, &c. &c. through which it requires most skilful piloting to steer without running a plough-handle into your side, a wagon tongue into your stomach, or stumbling over a pile of stone into a puddle of dirty water, knocking your back-bone into a most excruciating zigzag, your hat at the same time not only flying off your head, but flying perhaps a good ways on *u*-head, and out of pure sympathy for the rest of your clothing, falling into a pool of the same admirable composition. Mr. Keyser seriously incommoded with this nuisance, complained to the council, they grumbled at the mayor, he ordered the constable, and the constable swore at the offenders, who poured back upon him a volley of patented three-forked maledictions, lately imported from the dens of the English Metropolis, with sundry alterations and additions to suit time and circumstances; contending that if all other streets were not cleared of every thing bigger than a brick-bat, the obstacles should remain 'til the universal conflagration. They finally outswore the constable, a feat of such difficult performance, that

they richly deserved the victory that gave them the predominance.

The spirit of improvement has manifested itself somewhat, in the shape of private enterprize. A few houses have been built—several stables, and two or three hundred yards of white-washed fences, made with twelve feet boards set on their ends, with sharp-pointed nails on the top to keep the hatless, shoeless, ragged, sandy-haired, dirty-fisted, young rascallions from devouring every thing edible; from an apricot to a cabbage-stalk; cutting off pumpkin vines to make blowing-horns, and carrying away pocketsful of ripe tomatoes, to bespatter front doors, window-shutters, and signs.

The art of horticulture flourishes most luxuriantly in our place. Among others, our garden has been enriched and adorned with a lofty frame and lattice work, intended as a support for the european-isabella-regina-supersacarine-mellifluous grape. But reasoning from the appearance of the almost invisible shoots at the bottom of these galloway looking structures, one would suppose that their grapes were intended to sharpen the teeth of the thirteenth generation. In the way of fruit trees, we purchased last year a number of sprouts from a nursery peddler, which were to produce vandavars, rambows and green apples, and the sky blue, thin-skinned, pulpy royal East India plums. One half of them never afterwards showed the least signs of life, and the other part turn-

ed out to be rusty-coated, wrinkled, wilted, kind of a half crab-apple, the juice of which was too powerfully acidulous for anything but eating out horses' hoofs, and sharpening case-hardened three-cornered files.

To facilitate ingress and egress, the middle fence between our garden and Dickey's lot has been taken away, and the lot is annually planted with corn and potatoes. The last season was a little too dry for a good crop, but the year before we made the most extraordinary speculation in that way, that ever was made off a piece of ground of the same size.

Having predetermined to put it in potatoes, we put on about twenty loads of manure, hired a man to plough and score it out, planted the best seed at the proper time, had the patch hilled, hoed, and weeded, kept one boy watching to keep out the hogs, and two more employed to dig out the cut-worms. In the fall we hired John Harb and Old Bachman to dig them up, and it took them just four days and a half, during which time they demolished the but-end of a grist of flour, six hundred buck wheat cakes, a quarter of veal, twelve yards of sausage, and three times as many potatoes as they raised; besides, a crock of apple-butter, and a jar of cucumber pickles. The crop when measured, amounted to exactly seven bushels and three pecks, which according to the closest calculation I was able to make, cost just two dollars and seventy-five cents a bushel; additions to be made for Bachman's liquor and Harb's tobacco.

It is now growing late in the fall, truly the fattest season of the year, and as this is a plentiful country and the old routine of domestic manipulations is still performed to the *ne plus ultra* of ancestral customs, you may rest assured that we live in most luxurious plenty. As usual in October, we put up four or five jars of the compound cathartic, wind-colic syrup of grapes, properly called gripes. This is made by stripping them off the stems, after which they are put into jars, filled up with Orleans molasses, simmered three days on the stove, put several times into a hot oven, and finally stand a week in the sun. At the end of this time they are pretty well engaged in the vino-tartaric-acetous fermentation; when they are covered up well, put into the closet, there to remain until the spring of the year, then to be baked into tarts when nothing else of the pie kind is to be had; the only circumstances under which they are at all admissible. They are generally offered as an apology after a dinner of rusty bacon, watery potatoes and poke-leaf greens.

The next article of luxury to be prepared, is the Berks County White Pudding; a kind of gastrodinal internal adhesive plaster, a mixture of tallow and flour stuffed into the cleansed bowels of defunct swine seasoned sufficiently to make it digestible in the bowels of all living swine, who may chose to indulge in such swinish diet. It is only of late years that it has been used as an article of diet, as it was original-

ly intended as an emmollient cataplasm for suppurating scrofulous ulcers. The composition can only be eaten by those whose power of deglutition is strong enough to overcome its cohesion to the roof of the mouth. The science of swallowing it is now taught under the head of Gulpology. Next in order come the mince pies; that indigestible compound of suet, pudding meat, raisins, hard pippin apples and sour cider, baked with a shortened crust for the benefit of digestion, and brandy enough put in to direct the united influence of all the ingredients to the head; these are to be eaten only after people have eaten enough, and are generally administered in case of an overcharged stomach, or just before going to bed, to avoid an attack of nightmare, disagreeable dreams or congestive lethargy. But I must not leave the subject of pies without giving you an excellent recipe for making the

ECONOMICAL CRANBERRY TART.

It is as follows: Take 3 lbs. flour, 6 dozen eggs, 4 pounds of fresh butter; 12 lbs. white sugar, and a gallon and a half of sweet cream. These are to be well mixed with half a pint of the berries; but should the acidity of the latter predominate over the rest of the ingredients, sugar is to be added *ad libitum* until the taste of the berries is effectually disguised.

The butchering season now approaches with all its adipose concomitants. New hats and fine coats must now be laid aside for a few weeks, as all kinds of cookery are baked, boiled, stewed, fried and frittered in lard. Every thing you take hold of is greasy. Broom handles, ladle handles, and door handles, slip through your fingers like so many eels. The utmost circumspection is required in walking about the house during this period, for should you place the heel of your boot on a bacon skin or a handful of cracklings, away you go, perhaps thumping, bumping and swearing down a steep flight of steps, into a half subterraneous cellar-kitchen or wash-house, scaring the rats, skinning your shins on the edge of an iron kettle, or getting into a battle-royal with the soap-barrel.

The pantries, cellars, and cupboards from this time on, increase in a geometrical ratio of repletion, until the christmas holidays, which is the apex of the season of good things, fat meats, and sweetmeats. The womens fingers and the childrens bellies, are never free from the pastry, and apples; nuts, candies, jellies and cakes follow each other in such quick succession down the juyvenile gullets, as sometimes to produce serious disturbance below, not unfrequently ending in vomitings, cramps and convulsions; but as the indulgent parents never suspect their dear children of gluttony, the whole matter is usually blamed on the worms. But I must leave this subject and give you

a few items from my brothers' diary. His notes are very brief and indistinctly written, and as I have stolen the folio *pro tem*, I dare not ask him for any explanations, but I shall endeavor in course of time to give you the entire contents, text, context and appendix, with interlinear comments and marginal references; and perhaps I shall attach to the whole, a few engravings on sole-leather.

I have a few items of his experience which with a little amplification, would make subject matter of the first quality. At one place where he was attending a female patient, he sat down to a breakfast composed of fat bacon, two inches thick, swimming in melted lard, and a stack of dark serious-looking buck-wheat cakes baked forty-eight hours ante datum, surrounded by eighteen saucers of pickled beets and dried cherries. There was nobody to partake of this sumptuous fare but himself, the sick woman and a clay-colored hatchet-faced little girl twelve years of age with a misshapen head of sandy-colored, matted, frizzled, suspicious looking hair, who performed the manifold offices of lady's-maid, chamber-maid, butler, cook, steward and waiter.

In some parts of the country, as soon as a person is confined to his bed, they pour into him all sorts of steaming and sweating infusions and decoctions of sassafras, spearmint, pipsisewa, sweet marjorum, summer savory and wild tansy. If he gets over all this, they have no difficulty in mastering the disease;

but if the patient continues to grow worse, as soon as he gets to be three-fourths of the time delirious, and the other fourth speechless, they send for a doctor. There is then a continual stream of neighbors and acquaintances going to see him; but Sunday is the grand climax of sympathy. The whole population of ten square miles is packed in a room of ten feet square, with children and dogs stuck in amongst their legs to squeeze the column into the perfection of density. Ten or twelve constantly sitting on the edge of the sick man's bed, and only sixteen asking him questions at a time. All these folks are to be stuffed with a dinner, the one half stay for supper, and thirty or forty stay all night and take breakfast next morning.

Before I leave this subject I must give you an account of a most extraordinary kind of Scabbies Infernalis, or the hundred and seventy-seven years itch, which has taken its abode amongst the Malotts, Dydenhoofs and Lingenfelters.

The particular instance of its infection which stands preeminently conspicuous, exists in the family of a lazy, lousy, greasy-looking fellow, who is none other than a son of the renowned and notorious dirty-butter Malott. I was informed by one of his neighbors, that they have not washed a rag in five years, and have become so filthy that the neighbors are afraid to go within two miles of the house. The children run through the hazel bushes all day to scratch themsel-

ves, and every morning carry out three baskets full of scabs, which are now laying in piles around the house like buckwheat hulls around a flouring mill.

They have used almost every medicine in the pharmacopæia without effect. It has resisted the combined influence of Turpentine, Copperas, Charcoal, Red Precipitate, Blue Vitriol, Red Pepper, Aqua Fortis and Quicksilver. They have used several kegs of brimstone and hogs lard, which now can be smelled to the distance of twenty-five miles. So far had the sulphureous vapors extended during the Indian summer of last fall, that the people some twenty miles off had serious apprehensions of an earthquake; whilst in other parts of the country it was thought that there had been an unprecedented eruption of some volcanic mountain. There has been a consultation of thirty physicians and sixty old women, and they have come to the conclusion that the house must be burned to the ground with all the personal effects of the inmates, and the children to be boiled for six weeks in a double distilled solution of vinegar, Spanish flies, verdigris, quick-lime and hickory ashes.

You will perceive by my last letter that I have made wonderful progress in the study of German. It is truly a most difficult undertaking, but James and I bore away at it, and as we study the genuine philological forty-syllabled, high school Heidelberg dutch, we have to wind our way unassisted through all the gramatical intricacies and lexicographical syn-

optical researches. Each declension of nouns has a multitudinous infinity of terminations, with two or three five-columned pages of exceptions. The articles and pronouns are varied, spliced, split and splintered to correspond with all the numbers, persons, genders, divisions classes and cases, and it requires an almost superhuman effort of the memory to keep in mind the fifty-seven different inflexions of such words as herumschinderkreitzfluchtigen and verunterschellenblitzinbocken. To fortify as well as to dutchify ourselves for the digestion of these etymological gall bursters, we dine three times a week on fried onions and sour-cROUT, sup on doughnuts, dutch cheese, smearkase and apple-butter, and take a dose of Zollicoffers blutreinigen German pills every other morning. In addition to this, as James is the elder professor, he smokes one of the real old pole-cat stinkerifical dutch pipes with a china bowl, cap, hook and chain, three strings of beads platted round it, and ornamented with a miniature painting of the city of Gottingen on one side, and three country ale-houses on the other; with the head of Saint Nicholas beautifully carved on the bulb.

I must give you the last item of importance which has convulsed our usually quiet village.

It appears that some weeks since, an individual was seen in a store during the temporary absence of the clerk, in suspicious proximity to the money drawer. The important discovery was made by two nervous

old women, who being placed in ambush for the purpose, of course did not see less than they expected. Owing to his respectable connections it was deemed prudent to confine the knowledge of it, to a few of their intimate acquaintance. These soon imparted it to their favorites, the circle gradually widened. Mothers told it to daughters, they in their turn told it to the maids, and these like the hungry jackals of Judea, being always ready to batten on the character and reputation of any poor devil who may fall into their clutches, lost no time in communicating it to the whole sisterhood of the Philo Scandal society. It was simultaneously discussed in the parlor and the kitchen, over the magazine, the cradle, the dough chest and the wash tub; with ah's and oh's, goodness gracious, terrible, horrible, and a hundred other expressions of virtuous indignation.

A committee of twelve of the most glib-tongued spit-fire tattlers was appointed to circulate five hundred copies *viva voce*, with strict injunctions that the story must lose nothing in the recital. This soon stirred up the whole community so effectually, that there was a simultaneous convention of eighteen tea-parties and twenty-six quiltings; at each of which the accused was tried in due form, and as the probable innocence of the defendant was never for one moment thought of, of course no council appeared in his behalf. The several verdicts were accordingly rendered, but as they are too voluminous I will give you

But one, which by the way is the mildest and most merciful of the whole batch.

The culprit was sentenced to solitary confinement for twenty years, subsisting on a diet of horse-radish and indian turnip. To serve forty years exile in the brimstone quarries of Van Dieman's Land; and finally to be sent over the falls of Niagara, bunged up in a hogshhead of rattlesnakes.

P. S. As usual I enclose you my last effusion in an ode to my lovely Bess, who is now on a visit to her great grandmother in Ohio. It will appear in the next number of the "Stillhouse Gazette," which is now printed on the corner of Buzzard street and Goose alley, one door north of Gilmartin's whiskey shop, and two doors south of Mrs. Leatherbottom's hog-pen, and directly in the rear of Van Horn's ten-pin alley.

To Bess Fotzinger.

My dearest Bess,
I rather guess;
'Twill make you stare and squint Bess,
And feel ashamed
To see your name
Stuck up in public print, Bess.

But Bess forgive,
For as I live,
I could'nt sleep in bed Bess,
The thoughts of you
Kept running through
And through my troubled head, Bess.

They sorely prest
 Upon my breast,
 And daily I grew worse Bess,
 And should have died,
 Had I not tried
 To get relief in verse Bess.

For every day
 Since you're away,
 Beyond the Alleghany,
 I've dropt a tear
 For Betsy dear,
 Who lives in Pennsylvany.

Oh how I mind
 I used to find,
 You ev'ry Sunday night, Bess;
 Completely drest
 In Sunday's best,
 And braced up snug and tight, Bess.

All through the night
 Till broad day-light,
 Broke up our happy meeting;
 The time we passed
 As it flew fast,
 In courting and in eating.

For through the day
 You stowed away,
 And sure twas very wise Bess;
 As sweet a cake
 As you could bake,
 And stacks of apple pies, Bess.

And as we eat
These dainties sweet,
And you were nothing loth, Bess;
On what a bliss
It was, to kiss
The crumbs from off your mouth, Bess.

That mouth could show
A pearly row,
And when it opened wide, Bess,
Your large fat cheeks,
As red as beets,
Stuck out on either side, Bess.

A laughing fit,
So widely split
Your face, that I had fears, Bess,
Your mouth might cease
To keep the peace,
And quarrel with your ears, Bess.

Your forehead spread
High on your head,
And broader still than high, Bess;
A pimple grew
Of crimson hue,
Just over your left eye, Bess.

A tidy foot
You carried, but
Twas somewhat broad and flat, Bess;
And right upon
Each ankle bone,
There grew a lump of fat, Bess.

And though your waist
By stays was braced,
And corsets tightly bound, Bess;
With both arms wide .
I've often tried,
But could'nt reach around, Bess.

Dear Bess, adieu,
I'm very blue,
And feel the swelling tear, Bess,
In both my eyes,
About the size
Of half a pint of beer, Bess.

As there is yet a half sheet of paper left, I will fill it up with a piece which I lately wrote for the "*Squashtown Magazine*" Edited by Miss Sophronia Saphead.

Dead Shot for Bachelors.

O dark eyed maiden you've stolen my heart,
But this I would have you to learn miss,
That I would'nt be pained with this treasure to part,
If I only had your's in return miss.

One day whilst engaged as for years I have been,
In pursuing my daily vocation,
On a matter of bus'ness you just happened in,
And we held quite a short conversation.

We talked not of love, but of mere common place,
Such as ne'er could excite an emotion,
Yet I had'nt gazed long on your beautiful face,
Ere I loved you with ardent devotion.

With anxious inquiry I asked where you dwelt,
You gave me the name of the street, miss;
And you cannot conceive what a pleasure I felt,
For I knew that ere long we should meet, miss.

I strove to detain you conversing awhile,
Till you would'nt delay any more, miss,
But with gentle adieu, and a heavenly smile,
You gracefully moved to the door, miss.

Through a mutual friend whom I always esteemed,
Ere a week or ten days had passed o'er, miss,
I met you again, and Oh heavens! you seemed
More beautiful now than before, miss.

What rapture I felt as I talked with you there,
How I prayed it would last the whole day, miss,
But Old father Time in despite of my prayer,
Most relentlessly snatched you away, miss.

When you passed from my sight, oh how my heart
sank,
My pleasure was turned into pain, miss;
And life must for me be a desolate blank,
Until I could see you again, miss.

My books, which have hitherto been my delight,
Unopened now lay in a pile, miss,

In the bustle of day, in the stillness of night,
I think but of you all the while, miss.

For society too, I have lost all my taste,
No more can I join in the laugh, miss,
My jolly companions would tease me to death,
If they only could know the one half, miss.

So beware as to what I have written above,
Keep dark! not a word must be said, miss—
If the Bachelor's club should find out I'm in love,
They'll pitch me out heels over head, miss.

Immediately after finishing this piece, by some strange coincidence I was taken with an alarming fit of vertigo. A physician was called, who, when he came found the piece lying on the bureau, picked it up and read it carefully through, and his scientific but unpoetical diagnosis was, that the disease was "Softening of the Brain," and immediately had my head shaved and a bladder filled with ice drawn over it, and sundry other anti-phlogistic treatment which almost extinguished the last spark of poetic fire in my cranium.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Number Five.

CONCLAVE OF SCANDAL—AN IMPORTANT INDIVIDUAL
—SCHOOLS—MEASLES—VIEWS FROM A BALCONY—
OLD DAVY DIBLEBISS—ARRIVAL OF VISITORS—THE
FASHIONS OF THE DAY—THE FOURTH OF JULY—THE
DAY AFTER THE FOURTH—TO ALBUM CONTRIBUTORS
—THE VISION &C. &C.

M' Connellsburg Oct. 6, 1848.

Dear Cousin—

You have doubtless expected long ere this an answer to your kind and humorous letter. I acknowledge it is over due, but I am sorely at a loss for the proper materials.

Having unfortunately my own business to attend to, I have but little time to devote to that of my neighbors; which I regret very much as judging from the few items which fall in my way, that it possesses much more interest than my own. Yet you must not suppose me entirely ignorant of the little currents and eddies of village affairs that are rippling around me. Being a lone bachelor, I am not permitted to move in a very densely peopled social system. Nevertheless I am to some considerable extent informed as to the motions of the various planets and satellites of society; for there are amongst us as in every other enlightened community a large number of astronomers both male and female who make daily observations of their neighbor's transactions with glasses equal in magnifying power to that of the famous telescope of Herschel.

They then philosophize and speculate on their observations—make deductions—draw inferences and suppositions in every conceivable view of the subject, and in short leave nothing undone which can enlighten the community, and make them thoroughly acquainted with each others private affairs; and for the more perfect and public advancement in this department of useful knowledge, there are formed several

associations—principally female, who meet frequently and regularly; and as they sit with closed doors they make unreserved exchanges of news without regard to the feelings and interests of the unfortunate subjects of their communications.

The kind of information which is considered pre-eminently valuable, is that of the financial affairs of families, conubial difficulties, improper marriages—runaway matches and illegitimate births—both *expost facto* and *prospective*, and they endeavor to make their report in such a manner as to expose the most assailable points of all whose respectability might place them a degree higher than themselves in the social scale.

The several members of the Conclave of Scandal immediately upon the receipt of an important item, report directly to their husbands, who being no less disposed to gossip than their wives—retail it with a still longer tale in stores, taverns' shoe shops, barber shops, street corners and every other available place for an audience, and as my place of business is a frequent resort of a large number of those who have a surplus of time, of course I receive almost the entire current epitome, with the various comments and opinions of the audience, and not unfrequently a whole

string of parallel cases in elucidation of the subject, making the whole affair as luminous as mud, and as consistent as eating soup with a pitchfork.

I do not of course differ so much from my worthy fellow citizens as not to be a patient and willing listener, consequently I am frequently filled to such repletion with curious and interesting facts, that my eyes fairly stick out with the plethora of information. I feel as if I was soaked—saturated, stuffed and bloated with the accumulated filth of all the kitchens and nurseries of the village.

You must not be astonished when I tell you that old inhabitants move away and new ones come in their places, some make money, others break up; aged persons die occasionally, whilst young ones are born daily.

Yet with all these changes the Cove Mountain stands exactly where it did forty years ago, and the sun continues to rise daily over its summit as coolly as if nothing had happened; and I think will continue to do so until the death of the right honorable, venerable, voluble, blustering Samuel Doosenberry, the most important and self-important personage in our important little village. He is grand royal arch candle-stick holder of the Odd Fellows—president of the

supervisional committee of the Sons of Temperance, Vice President of the Calithumpian Association, Secretary of the Beneficial Society, Chairman of the Town Council, Overseer of the poor, Coroner, Street Commissioner, Auctioneer, Court Crier and Deputy Constable. He opens the Circuit court, closes the school house, cleans out the market house, lights up the church, winds the town clock, and rings the dutch bell; besides being an honorary member of the school directors, fire company and methodist church. Poor Sam he considers himself the main-spring and regulator of the village, and firmly believes that his absence or death would give rise to an insurrection.

The most important matters now in progress here are the Free School, Geographical School, Music School and the measles. The free school is crowded with all sizes and colors of greasy-sleeved candle-nosed; broom-headed, shirt-tailouted juveniles from the weed smoking and sweating apprentice boy of eighteen, down to the tender little diapered urinating innocent of the nursery. The teacher is incarcerated in the 8 by 10 log school house on the south-east corner of Jimmy McCardy's potato patch, with an ungovernable mob of seventy-five scholars one half the time occupied in keeping the older ones from eating apples

and fighting, and the other half in keeping the younger ones from crying and freezing. He gets twenty-five dollars a month, two shirts from the Ethiopian Sewing Society, boards round with the scholars and takes bed-bugs and pot-luck.

The geography school is carried on by a long-haired, hump-backed, hollow-bellied, sunken-eyed pill-garlick, billicious-looking itinerant lecturer, who professes to teach the geography of the whole world in two weeks, by a course of six sugar-coated lessons. But I fear he will not be able to fulfil his promise, as one half his scholars don't know whether oranges grow in Patagonia or Kamscatka, and the other half don't know an isthmus from a big popotamus.

The music school is rather a select concern, and is confined to the smooth-faced collar-choked verdant male embryos of nineteen, with the dear interesting, blushing modest little damsels of incipient puberty. No boys allowed outside, nor spectators admitted inside. As most of the tender maidens are of a sensitive, pensive, plaintive, sympathetic, lachrymose, diuretic and melancholy turn, their teacher has selected pieces peculiarly adapted to persons of this tender temperament.

I have procured a list of their pieces from one of

the scholars, and it runs as follows:—The Melancholy Student—The Ragged Wanderer—The Blind Schoolmaster—The Crippled Soldier—The Crazy Sailor—The Lame Beggar—The Lousy Nigger—The Tearful Bumblebee—The Blubbering School Miss—The Mewing Kitten—The Sick Lap-dog—The Lost Canary Bird—The Dying Butterfly and Granny Mc Lanes Lament.

As his scholars are very industrious and enthusiastic and find it impossible to refrain from practicing on sunday, the thoughtful teacher has selected for this purpose, a list of pieces which are supposed by the best judges to be so free from any thing of a worldly nature as to suit the most lugubrious skillet-headed disciple of deep-blue orthodoxy.

They are as follows; The Consumptive's Melody—The Grave-Yard Serenade—The Tombstone Strathspey—The Skeleton Jig—The Sepulchral March—The Scorching Sinners' Hornpipe—The Coffin Overture—The Brimstone Waltz—The Fiery Polka—Wail of the Damned, and Grand Chorus of the Rusty Hinges of Hades.

The class is making good progress and have become so proficient that they are soon to give a grand

concert for the benefit of the "Heathen Sewing Society;" the money to be applied for the purchase of rocking-horses for the nigger babies in Cutagutahline.

In regard to the measles their nature is directly opposite that of the music society, being by no means select in their company. No class of the community can complain of being slighted by them, as they visit alike the overfed sugar-fisted, cranberry-tarted, hot-bed puppets of the rich, and half-starved, half-naked, goggle-eyed, cadaverous offspring of squallid suburban niggers.

The disease has as yet manifested itself only in a mild form, so that the physicians have less to do with it than the old women, who manage it chiefly by keeping the children in and driving the measles out, their remedies consisting chiefly of honey and butter stews, onion poultices, sheep saffron tea, goose grease and chamber-lye embrocations.

This summer we took a notion to have an additional story put on our house. To save time we had six brick-layers and ten carpenters at once, who soon made the old roof and gables "vanish like the baseless fabric of a vision" leaving nothing but old plas-

ter and brickbats behind, which were soon cleared away, and two new rooms with a balcony erected on their site. How we ever got along without this balcony is a mystery, as it is such a capital place to lounge in hot weather—to air beds in dry weather, and dry clothes in wet weather; moreover, it commands a beautiful view of the garden, the smoke-house, stable, and other out-buildings, taking in the whole of Hog-street and Poverty-alley, across old Mrs. Smith's sheep-pen, Kritchbaum's turnip patch, and terminates far down in the distant windings of Mud-lane.

We had a busy time during the building, of it. Such a number of mouths to feed as kept the women on their stumps early and late. The dough-chest and bread-baskets always filled with the *kneadful*, and the cooking-stove and the housemaids face in a state of continual torrefaction.

Barrels of flour melted down like snow, and quarters of beef disappeared like mists before the morning sun; whilst the coffee-pot spouted daily, before the multitude, an inexhaustible stream of encouragement, and the tea-kettle sang gaily its melodious strains, sending its vapors in voluminous clouds, far over the heads of the busy circle, mingling with

the grateful savor, which steamed up from the smoking viands below. The kitchen cabinet became the seat of government—the vital organ of domestic economy. The parlor lay deserted, dark and cold in silent neglect, and the front door closed against visitors, as tight as the gates of the ancient temple of Janus.

The women formed themselves into a select committee on supplies; James became superintendent of door-latches and window patching, and I was duly appointed chairman of a committee of one on old stove pipes, my regalia consisting of a leather apron, two dirty towels, an old pair of buckskin gloves, a pair of blacksmith tongs, a hammer and a billet of wood.

We had not the slightest interruption during the whole period, except once on a saturday afternoon, when work appears to accumulate, instead of diminishing; when children get noisy and unmanageable, women cross, and all hands heels over head in a whirlwind of hurry to get everything in order before the approaching sabbath. On such a day, the men were driving their work like so many steam engines. The hammers rattled on the roof; the trowels clinked on the chimneys, the masons yelled mort, and the tender rushed up stairs like a New York fireman with twice as much mud on his heels as he had in his hod,

leaving most of it on the stairs as he went up, and tramping it out as he came down, occasionally squirting half a pint of tobacco juice over it, to keep it from staining the wood.

One of the maids, rigged out in a *deshabille* of old clothes, with her head tied up in a red cotton handkerchief, was blacking the stoves in the yard, and the other was washing, baking, scrubbing, cooking and scolding the children, who had all the doors open—four cages built in the corners of the sitting room, of tables and chairs, and were stirring up the enclosed animals into a most melodious uproar, with the shovel, tongs, cornbroom &c.

Old Davy Dibilbiss had butchered a calf, and was walking to and fro from the kitchen to the wash-house—had all the tubs, basins, crocks and pitchers in the house filled with skins, livers, lights, gut-fat and brains, and was calling for towels, knives, spoons, ladders and spices—making as much noise, and giving every body as much trouble as he could. When lo! in the midst of all this, a carriage load of visitors drove up to the door. It consisted of one man, five overdressed women, four noisy children, two servants, a nurse girl, six leather trunks, twelve band-boxes, half a cord of umbrellas, fans, parasols and carpet-sacks, two squalling babies and a spotted dog. All

these with the exception of the baggage alighted and made their way unobserved through the hall, and had penetrated as far as the kitchen, which they were only prevented from entering by a high tide of suds and hot water, in which stood one of the maids, ankle-deep, with her dress tucked up in front, and sloped gradually down to a point behind, which bobbed playfully up and down into the fluid below, keeping most admirable time with the motions of the nymph, who swept to and fro with a hickory broom, with all the force of a steam engine.

At this point they stood in perfect dismay, and were about forming themselves into a council to consult about beating a retreat, the youngest boy having in the mean time lost his slippery footing, and tumbled over into the surging element. He was just being rescued from his perilous situation as the lady of the house entered, who immediately showed them into the sitting room, tore down two or three of the animals' cages, and seated them as comfortably as could be done in a carpetless room by a cold stove. They however, unlike most visitors of the kind, had too little brass, or too much discretion to remain; and soon withdrew to the inexpressible relief of the women, who forthwith returned to their work, the animals to their cages, and every thing went on again "wi ratlin glee."

In the course of human events however, all things were restored to order, and moved in their wonted harmony.

It is a useful and interesting amusement to observe even in this secluded and obscure diminutive miniature village, the changes of fashions, and in the habits of the people. The female portion, of course, taking the lead in the introduction of all innovations. Shoulders, which a few years back, could feel comfortable under a plain and substantial calico dress, cannot now carry any thing heavier than a spider-web, invisible, intangible *italien* lace, needle-work cape of the real Neapolitan metropolitan manufacture. The heads have most disdainfully tossed off the maiden-like, or matron-like bonnet of by-gone simplicity, and now erect themselves haughtily under a labyrinthical open work, honey-comb, plaited, twisted, intertwined, inexplicable structure, securely hidden under a variegated brush-heap of ribbons, rouches, flowers, beads and tinsel. The cloak which was formerly made of six or eight yards of neat and plain material, light enough to be carried without difficulty, has now given way to the European Eugenia fine-twined, double-milled three-ply circassian merino; must contain at least twenty-five square yards, finished with three bodies, and six capes, quilted in four thicknesses, and lined with satin velvet. And for fear of an

appearance of economy, the seams, collar-edges, capes and skirts are frilled, frizzled and fandangled with mohair, camels hair, badgers hair, gilt buttons and gold edging.

Kid gloves go hand in hand with these extravagances, and silk stockings, and satin shoes follow in the footsteps of their woolen and calf-skin predecessors.

Thus does the present generation dissipate in a few months, the hard earned savings of many laborious years of the frugal and industrious parents-

Many an old and cherished homestead passes away under the hammer of the sheriff; but this is a small evil compared with the mortification of living out of the fashion, or within their means.

The summer has now entirely passed away, and nothing of note has occurred during the whole season with one single exception, which you may well suppose was the 4th of July.

On this occasion there was a grand Christian Association and Sabbath School union celebration. The children of the several denominations were convened at their respective churches, then formed in procession and marched out to the beautiful low-land grove south-east of the village, generally known as the Widow Holstein's Bottom, where they partook of a sumptuous dinner under the sylvan shade. The chil-

dren of course came first in the order of the entertainment, and to this they did ample justice, the more especially, as they were overlooked and encouraged by an immense reserve corps of hungry and admiring ministers, elders managers, superintendents, teachers, colporteurs, tract agents and other pious strangers and itinerant missionary exhorters, who looked on with most devout thankfulness and heartfelt satisfaction, to see how the dear little gluttons did eat.

After the usual reading of the Declaration, sundry orations, juvenile exhortations, temperance speeches, cold water songs, prayers and a benediction, the festivities of the day ended; all returned to their homes and nothing farther was heard until next morning, when Mr. Chamberlain Potts, Secretary of the Interior, reported twelve cases of indigestion, fourteen cases of cholera morbus, eighteen cases of griping diarrhea, and twenty-five cases of cholera infantum; besides a large number of sick head aches and dry belly aches, not taken into the account.

P. S. Some time ago a young lady presented me her album, requesting me to write a piece in it. Upon examination I found it half filled with selected and stolen pieces, which her contributors had presented for lack of brains, to compose something themselves. So in order to give them a gentle reproof

and prevent the further introduction of such pieces, I inserted the following lines, which I hope may prove edifying and instructive to those literary pick-pockets, and pretentious dough-heads who do not appear to know an album from a scrap-book.

To Album Contributors.

There are poets of wisdom, and poets of wit,
And poets who write the bombastic,
And small po-tatoes, who struggle to get
Up something a little sarcastic.

Some beautiful verses they often indite,
From the writings of others selected,
Then bribe some smart little schoolboy, to write
Them in letters well pennæd and corrected.

They have but a small stock of genius themselves,
And whenever they wish to clap fire on,
They've but to reach up to their library shelves,
And take down a copy of Byron.

When they wish to write wisdom, they copy from
Young,

With Milton's sublime too, they fill us,
And seek for their love-sickly ditties, among
The writings of Moore, or of Willis.

As for writing original verses they can't,
And they often feel puzzled and queer,
For whenever the books are away that they want,
They must copy from those that are near.

The Vision.

WRITTEN FOR THE WATERTOWN REFRIGERATOR.

A TEMPERANCE MONTHLY.

"I had a dream, which was not all a dream,"
And why not all a dream, seems very queer,
But when explained, does not so puzzling seem—
One half was dream, the balance lager beer.

1.

I once had a dream, a dream of the past,
And mingled with dark foreboding,
It left an impression which seemed to last,
Deep into my mind corroding.

2.

But time rolled over and wore it away,
Till at last it had faded and vanished,
And again I was happy and cheerful and gay,
For I thought it forever was banished.

3.

But a night of late, as I sat in my chair,
Till the candle grew low and dim,
Before me there seemed a gaunt spectre there,
With a countenance ghastly and grim.

4.

And dimly behind him a female stood,
Like a mist transparently thin,
'Twas not like a being of flesh and blood,
But something which once had been.

5.

But slowly it grew more vivid and bright,
Till its waxen features grew plain;
I gazed on those features, and O such a sight,
Distorted with sorrow and pain.

6.

Between us the spectre still seemed to stand,
Not a marble feature did stir,
But he slowly raised his skeleton hand,
And pointed it calmly at her.

7.

A gloomy shadow hung over her head,
And in it were painfully bright
Words, which I almost trembled to read—
Words which I dare not write.

8.

The spectre's face seemed troubled the while,
As if some dark secret he knew,
Then he looked at me with a ghastly smile,
Saying—mortal, thy dream was true.

9.

Dost thou know that I hold at my command,
The records of by-gone sin—
The keys of the future are here in my hand,
Wilt thou venture to look within.

10.

I would not, I could not, I dared not to look,
Though I am not the creature of fear,
But I shuddered and shrank as the spectre spoke,
“You drink too much lager beer.”

EPITAPH
ON
DOUGENSBREAD FORBESS.

Here slumber the relics of Old Dougensbread,
The quizzical comical Forbess;
Who lived till the hair was all grey on his head,
Then died with the cholera morbus.

LETTER TO SAM.



M'Connellsburg. April, 1849.

Dear Sam.—I must beg a thousand pardons for delaying so long, to answer your last epistle, and perhaps my indolence would even now predominate over the desire to write, had not something lately occurred which has stirred up my sluggish nature into an unusual state of activity; and as it may prove instructive to you, I will endeavor to give it to you as much in detail as the space of a few sheets will admit.

Trifling as it may appear, it may be of vast importance to you, for as you are yet a single gentleman, you may sooner or later find yourself in a similar predicament.

In the early part of last summer, a beautiful and interesting young lady came to make a visit of some months with her relatives in our village. Through them I made her acquaintance; and as she combined intelligence with beauty, I of course soon became deeply enamored, and ere long had reason to believe that my unremitting attentions had produced the desired effect. At all events, we became very informal and intimate; but time rolled on, her visit ended, and she left for her home, in the north-eastern part of the state.

We of course corresponded, and she being of a pious turn of mind, and withal a warm advocate of cold water principles, sent me from time to time, numerous religious journals, and temperance documents; such as the New York Evangelist, Zion's Herald, The Puritan Bluelight, The Sinners Guillotine, The Drunkards Shower Bath, The Watertown Refrigerator &c., to which I responded by sending her The Unitarian Recorder, Universalists' Text Book, and other papers of a liberal tendency. I read her papers carefully, and filed them away as sacred souvenirs; but her treatment of mine was far different; for I received a letter, in which she ironically returned her sincere thanks for the documents I had been kind enough to send her, stating at the same time, that she

had not felt sufficient interest to examine their contents, and had accordingly handed them to a very curious old lady, whom she facetiously styled the Widow Jones, who lived in a very small cottage in the extreme corner of their garden, almost hidden amongst the trees, and surrounding shrubbery. Stating, that as the old lady had no rising family, and had never been very choice in the selection of her literature, she presumed that no great harm would be done by the contaminating influence of my documents. This was the smoothest and keenest sarcasm I had ever met with, and I of course smelt a rat, or something of a similar odor. I was highly indignant, and hasted to inform her by note, to tell Mrs. Jones, that I had discontinued her papers.

I found that the balance of trade was yet against me, and in order, as much as possible, to make up the deficiency, I wrote her the following piece, which of course ended the correspondence.

The Widow Jones.

Oh dont you remember the garden my dear,
And its beautiful shrubbery too—
The Widow's small cot, in a green shady spot.
So snugly shut out from the view.

There is an old Widow they call Mrs. Jones,
And a clever old lady is she,
Who lives in a neat little house which she owns,
Right under the Old Apple tree.

'Tis a neat little house, with seats all around,
Most luxurious seats it is said,
But even in winter, has never been found
To contain e'er a stove or a bed.

'Tis a cottage in form, with roof like a shed,
The rooms all upon the ground floor—
One circular window, right over your head,
While passing in through the front door.

A very deep cellar there is down below,
Which contains—so at least we are told,
By those who have made it their business to know,
—No matter—they say it's not gold.

The sweet briar vines all over its wall,
And the house is surrounded with roses,
Yet, the odorous zephyrs, which float through its
hall,
Are too pungent for delicate noses.

Mrs. Jones' as quite a resort, is well known,
She receives many calls ev'ry day—
It is pleasant indeed, as all her friends own,
To drop in and make a short stay.

She is visited there by the fairest of fair,
In their silks and their satins and shawls,
Her house is ne'er missed, 'tis first on the list,
When they're making their morning calls.

Her dwelling is free to every degree,
Without any charges to pay,
Yet even the poor, when they enter her door
Leave a trifle before they go way.

The high and the low, the old and the young,
She welcomes alike ev'ry guest,
There they sit at their ease, just as long as they
please;
No matter how shabbily drest.

A prudent old lady she is, for she knows
So much that she never expresses,
Of ragged and tattered and shabby old clothes,
Hanging down under beautiful dresses.

Oh! many a tale could the widow unfold,
At which the young dandies would wonder,
How many fine velvets, all hanging with gold,
Have dirty old petticoats under.

The Widow's is quite a good place too; to read—
For 'tis one of her curious capers,
No matter what politicks, party or creed,
She must take all the regular papers.

The dailies, and weeklies, besides if 'tis true,
It is wicked, outrageous, prodigious,
They say she takes infidel documents too,
Though the most of her friends are religious.

But what is most strange, she is pleased just as much,
And fully as eagerly catches
Old temperance almanacks printed in dutch,
As she does at the latest dispatches.

Such a book-worm indeed the old lady was born,
That she suffers no sheet to escape her,
No matter how rumpled or dirty or torn,
And she even has piles of brown paper.

Of love letters too, she has a good store,
For sweethearts go there to peruse them,
Then leave them on file after reading them o'er,
That the gentle old Widow may use them.

Here these letters are sure to be fully secure,

For ev'ry young school miss well knows it,

The Widow can keep, most skillfully deep,

A secret and never expose it.

Long live the old Widow, and peaceful her end,

For their visit, no matter how speedy,

She is always on hand to receive an old friend,

And her doors never close on the needy.

As this shot effectually silenced her witty and sarcastic battery, and she has not since returned to the charge, I have no way of telling what disposal she made of the verses, but I presume they occupy a prominent place in Mrs. Jones' scrap-book. Good bye, when you hear from me again, my letter will be dated from Columbus, Ohio, to which place I am about to remove, with the intention of making it my future residence.

Part Second.



To my friend Andy.

My dear old companion allow me the pleasure,
Of expressing my feelings in old fashion'd measure,
As no other suitable style could I find,
For those old recollections so dear to my mind.
How often in revery's dreams do I rove,
'Mid my own native hills, which surround the Great
Cove.

On fancy's light wings to their summits I go
To gaze with delight on the landscape below.
There spread out beneath me, how vivid it seems,
Are the woods and the fields, the meadows and
streams,
The road that leads up, and the road that leads down,
And the turnpike that leads through the midst of the
town,

Its turnings and windings I follow on still,
Till they're lost o'er the top of the opposite hill.
I see the old church where in earliest youth,
I sat 'neath the sound of the Gospel of truth,
And the old stone school-house, that prison abode,
Where I trembled each day at the sight of the rod.
And watched the old tyrant who sat there with
specks,

Looking cross-ey'd, and sideways, whilst eyeing our
tricks,
Till assured of his game, then came round with his
stick,

And down on our backs "like a thousand of brick."

* * * * *

I sought for a friend who was clever, and true,
And happily found one to please me in you.
I studied you well, and I found you possess'd
Of a generous heart in a true Irish breast,
I cherished you then, and I cherish you yet,
With feelings I know I shall never forget,
I think of thee, friend, on the bright summer morn,
Such a time as we stroll'd through the fields of green
corn,

You theorized deep on the nature of soils
On minerals, clays, and bituminous oils,

How these are dissolved by the action of rain
And become the constituent parts of the grain.
I think of thee friend, in the twilight's dim shade,
The time which for sweet recreation was made,
When released from your toils, you took down the
 red fiddle,
And made it speak out to the tune Yankee Doodle,
Or Rory O'More, or some old Scottish air,
While I rocked the time in the split-bottomed chair.
I think of thee friend, in the winter's long nights,
When the fire-side is sought for its social delights,
How we sat by the large kitchen chimney and smoked
And reasoned on science and argued and joked—
Discussed with some warmth each political broil,
Whether Loco, or Native, or Whig, or Freesoil,
Until somewhat excited, you ventured so far
As to say, that Polk made the whole Mexican War,
Then worked yourself up quite into a sweat,
At the awful big lies of the Bedford Gazette.
I think of thee friend when in spirit depress'd
A load of dull care presses hard on my breast,
And long for that friend, whose heart ever flows
With the tenderest feelings which sympathy knows.
I think of thee friend, when I mix with the fair,
Whose smooth glossy ringlets of bright auburn hair,

Hang in tasteful profusion, half hiding the graces,
Which play o'er the features of beautiful faces,
For I know your susceptible heart ever warms
At the sight of these heavenly feminine charms.
And that soon you may leave the lone bachelor's life,
For a beautiful, fruitful and dutiful wife,
Is the prayer of your friend, who considers himself
For a bachelor booked, and laid upon the shelf.

Columbus, Jan., 15, 1851.

MY NATIVE MOUNTAINS.

'Tis midnight; on the mountains brown,
The cold round moon shines deeply down:
Blue roll the waters; blue the sky,
Spreads like an ocean hung on high.—*Byron.*

Thou prince of rhyme, immortal bard,
Whose numbers sweetly, softly roll;
Thy words do touch the tenderest chord
That vibrates quick within my soul.

Their sound strikes on my mem'ry's ears,
With pleasing melancholy chime—
And leads me back o'er lapse of years,
Long ere I left my native clime.

There midst the mountain crags I roved,
Free as that very mountain's air;
Its lofty peaks I dearly loved,
My heart's affections all were there.

In the calm hour of eventide,
On mild autumnal sombre days,
I loved to saunter on its side—
Enveloped in the fleecy haze.

I loved to course the purling stream
That murmured round its southern base;
Deeply absorbed in waking dream,
In that secluded, lonely place.

I loved to see the mountain storm,
Slowly gathering in its might—
'Till the dark clouds in fearful form
Seemed resting on its rugged height.

I loved to see the lightning's flash
Hurl the tall pine in fragments' round—
And hear the thunder's awful crash,
Shake the firm hills with jarring sound.

Oh! then my swelling soul would fill
With rising thoughts sublime and grand—
Of him who curbs the storm at will,
And holds the thunders in his hand.

I loved to hear the whirlwind roar,
Strewing with boughs the valleys green;
Then see the long dark night come o'er,
And close in blackness on the scene.

I loved to see the morn awake,
After a night of storm and dread;
To see the sun in brightness break,
And o'er the vale his glory spread.

I loved to breathe the morning breeze,
And slowly climb the winding path—
O'er shiver'd rocks, and fallen trees,
The fragments of the tempest's wrath.

But far above each lovely scene
That pen can paint, or fancy knows,
I loved the silence, calm, serene—
Of midnight's hour of deep repose.

Oft at this hour, by feeling swayed,
Or something which I could not tell;
With slow and pensive step I've strayed,
Far in the depths of mountain dell.

Whilst riding high, the silent moon
Poured from her zenith altitude,
Her soothing rays melliflous down,
Bathing the crags with silvery flood.

At such a time, like spirits free,
The soul holds converse high and good—
A silent wordless colloquy,
With nature in her loveliest mood.

There is a spirit in this hour,
Could e'en the dark assassin feel,
Methinks its voice would have the power
To melt his hardened heart of steel.

Oh! could it take a form of speech,
Expressive of a thing so fair—
The wicked heart of man 'twould reach,
And drive out all that's evil there.

Dirge of the State House Bell.

Columbus, farewell ! no more shall you hear,
My voice so familiar for many a year—
Those musical sounds, which you recognized well,
As the clear-sounding tones of your State House
Bell.

Ere the red man had gone, I was mounted on high,
When the wide-spreading forest which greeted
mine eye,
Gave forth from its thickets the panthers wild yell,
As he heard the strange sound of your State House
Bell.

Uncompanied, unanswered, I sounded alone,
And mingled my chime with its echo's deep tone;
Till spire after spire, rising 'round me did swell
Their response, to the sound of your State House
Bell.

I called you together to make yourselves laws,
And daily my voice was for every good cause;
When aught of importance or strange was to tell,
You were summoned full soon by your State House
Bell.

As a sentinel, placed on the watch-tower's height,
Columbus, I've watched thee, by day and by night
—Though slumb'ring unconscious, when danger be-
fell,
You were roused by the clang of your State House
Bell.

But while I watched o'er you, the Fire King came,
And enveloped my tower in his mantle of flame;
Yet true to my calling, my funeral Knell
Was tolled, on that night, by your State House
Bell.

Your sons of the Engine and Hose, ever brave,
And prompt at my call, quickly hastened to save;
But alas! their best efforts were fruitless to quell,
The flames that rose over your State House Bell.

When my Cupola trembled, I strove but to sound
One peal of farewell to your thousands around;
But you lost, as midst timbers and cinders I fell,
That last smothered tone of your State House Bell.

Columbus, Feb., 10, 1852.

On Judge Hardhead.

A DILAPIDATED POLITICIAN.

Here's a health to the old political horse—
May his friends bring him out again on the course;
His judgeship we know is a popular man,
And we'll give him some office again if we can;
For we're longing once more to feed the old rat,
And see his old shrivelled up carcass grow fat.
As an orator too, the Judge is a trump,
For a man with more brass never stood on the stump;
He can tell of great doings which never took place,
And swear to them too, with a serious face;
The Judge is esteemed by the foreigners much,
He is loved by the Irish, and loved by the Dutch,
The American's love him, for all of them say,
That the Judge is the very best man of his day.

No man in the town has received more abuse,
Yet Old Hardhead has always been "*right on the
goose,*"
A genuine democrat, always on hand,
A horn of Old Bourbon to take with a friend.
At the Depot he drinks whiskey out of a jug—
In the Fifth Ward he drinks Lager Beer from a mug;
In fact there is not an old whiskey-burnt bloat,
But swears that the Judge shall have his next vote.
As a partizan too, the Judge is a brick,
Or the dregs of democracy boiled down thick.
Does the party go in for a war against Banks,
The Judge is the very first man in the ranks.
Do they go in for Cuba, all right says the Judge—
We owe the d—d half-breed Creoles' a grudge;
Or kick-up with England a national fight,
To be sure says the Judge, "*go in*" its all right.
Here's a health to the Judge, may his belly grow wide,
And always have lots of good liquor inside,
May it stick out each side and stick out before
Till he never can see his old legs any more.

January 13, 1856.

The Supper at the "States."

From "Capital City Fact" of March 14, 1856.

By invitation, a select party of the friends of Col. SIMONTON, assembled at the United States Hotel, last evening, and partook of the hospitalities of "mine host," At ten o'clock, supper was announced, and chairs set for over seventy persons soon found occupants. The tables were tastefully displayed and sumptuously laden with luxuries, delicacies, substantials and "corked accompaniments." The repast did renewed credit to the taste and generosity of SIMONTON & SON, and the occasion was marked by an unusual degree of social feeling and true republican conviviality.

It may not be out of place here, (on behalf of the editor of this paper, who was unavoidably absent from the city,) to return thanks for the large number of friendly sentiments offered and the kind feelings man-

ifested towards the editor of the CAPITAL CITY FACT. Had the "Colonel" been present, he would certainly have "blushed to hear the burden of their praise."

At the usual hour for bringing such parties to a close—one o'clock—the guests retired, all heartily gratified with the proceedings and the entertainment.

We subjoin one of the toasts complimentary of our host, written by JOHN M. DENIG.

TO COL. SIMONTON.

If a man would stay a few days in our town,
And live on the best of good fare,
Just let the omnibus put him down
In old Col. SIMONTON's care.

There, early or late, no matter what hour,
As soon as the traveler stops,
He barely has time to get to the door,
When out old Simonton pops.

His jolly red face, is a glorious sight,
Which the stranger is happy to see;
His shake of the hand gives a thrill of delight,
For 'tis hearty and strong and free.

One look at the Col. dispels all his cares,
And quiets his stomach to rest,
For he knows that a belly like Simonton wears,
Must be fed on the richest and best.

Let him come in an omnibus, carriage or stage,
In wagon or buggy or sleigh,
In less than five minutes, I'll freely engage,
His baggage is all stowed away.

His horse, if he has one, is stabled and fed
With plenty of oats, corn and hay,
And under his feet his bedding is spread
As thick as the straw can lay.

And then as the stranger sits down by the grate,
With slippers so soft on his feet,
He has but a very few moments to wait
'Till he gets a good supper to eat.

There's mutton and pork and cutlet and steak,
And chicken done up in a stew,
And butter as sweet as the farmer can make,
With strong tea and good coffee too.

There is bread that's as light as the baker can bake,
And biscuits of various size;
There's tarts and there's custards and all kinds of
And all kinds of puddings and pies. [cake,

And then if the trav'ler feels weary and dry,
And would like to have something to drink,
He has but to look out 'till he catches his eye,
And then give the old Col. the wink.

Or if he is near, just give him a hunch,
And I'll venture, in less than a minute,
He'll see a small pitcher of hot whiskey punch,
With lots of old Bourbon mixed in it.

And then, if the man wants to talk for a while,
The Col. is in with him there;
His capital jokes never fail to beguile,
And lighten a man from his care.

No matter how tough a hard story is told,
That no man can credit or swallow,
The Col. will trump it before it gets cold,
And tell one that beats it all hollow.

The "City Fact."

The following verses, read at the SIMONTON Festival, on Thursday evening last, are published by request of a number of the participants in the festivities of that occasion. If the toast "piles it up too steep," the responsibility is with the author, J. M. DENIG.

Col. Geary and the "Fact."

Success to the Capital City Fact,
And health to old Col. Geary;
For the former has never in interest lacked,
And the latter has never grown weary.

He has stood at the helm, all fearless and brave,
When temperance storms assailed him,
His vessel rode fearfully high on the wave,
But the Col.'s heart never failed him.

He told the cold-water men, when they gased,
To blow their great temperance bubble,
And then when the thing was exploded and past,
They'd find them Damphools for their trouble.

He told them that liquor was made for man,
And none of them ventured to doubt it;
Then how can we carry out nature's great plan,
By trying to live without it?

He told them the Frenchman must have his good
And the Irishman whiskey is dear to, [wine,
The Scotchman considered his ale divine,
And the German must have lager beer, too.

He told them the Russian drank brandy in shops,
Where he called on the Virgin to bless it,
The pious old Dutchman drank Schiedam
With a little brown sugar to dress it. [Schnapps,

The Englishman fattened on porter and stout,
But the American's range is far wider,
For he drinks every good drink that ever came out,
From brandy, clear down to hard cider.

So fill up your glasses with toddy well stirred,
And drink 'till your eyes get bleary,
For the voice of the people will ever be heard,
Through the press of old Col. Geary.

And should ever white paper get dear and scarce,
Before that his press shall be stinted,
We'll tear the last ragged shirt from our back,
And send to the Fact to be printed.

Epitaph,

—ON—

STINGY DAVY.

At length Old Stingy Ichabod
Has ended all his groans,
And now beneath this grassy sod,
Crumble his rotten bones.

He starved and hoarded all his days,
'Till living got too high,
When he at last, to save expense,
Concluded he would die.

Whether he had a soul or not,
Is not for certain known,
But if he had, when Davy died,
The Devil got his own.

John Fortney's Courtship.

A SERIO-COMIC POEM.

CANTO FIRST.

A Bachelor, tired of his bachelor life,
Resolved to go in search of a wife;

For his life had grown lonely and dreary.
Long years he had passed amid poisonous drugs;
His only companions were bottles and jugs,
And boxes of pills and greasy old mugs,
'Till of these he was sickened and weary.

His sickness was not such a sickness as kills,
But t'was one of the direst of human ills,
And no mortal could long endure it:—
'Twas worse than the worst of shivering chills,
And past the hope of powders and pills—
Neither colagogue nor syrup of squills
Could be expected to cure it.

So he put himself under the Barber's care,
Who trim'd and greased and scented his hair,
And combed his beard in the fashion.
He thought he would be most tastfully dressed,
So he bought him a figured and spotted vest,
With stripes running up and down on the breast,
Which he had to pay the hard cash on.

He then selected a glossy silk hat,
A beautiful cross-barred satin cravat,
And shirt collars cut a la Byron;
With buttons and strings to fasten them tight,
And washed and bleached all snowy and white,
And starched so stiff as to stand upright,
Just as if the edges had wire on.

He blackened his boots as black as jet,
'Till they glistened and shone as if they were wet,
And even the heels looked shining;
He brushed his hat 'till it glistened, too,
He brushed his old coat 'till it looked like new,
And brushed his old pants to make them do,
Although they were sadly declining.

Thus rigged, and soaped, and scented all right,
He paid a visit one Saturday night,
To a couple of handsome young lasses;
But as the business was somewhat new,
He feared that going alone would'nt do,
So he coaxed along his companion, the Jew,
With the promise of several glasses.

Indeed 'twas a glorious, happy night;
The girls were merry, the fire burned bright,
And tongues ran on with a clatter.
Besides, the Jew was a famous wit;
Could quote from all the poets a bit,
And withal made many a happy hit—
A little too pointed to flatter.

The girls, in truth, were a charming pair.
For both were beautiful, chaste and fair,
And Old Colagogue was puzzled.
He almost forgot his part of the play,
And seemed for all the world, as they say,
Like the ass between two bundles of hay,
With his mouth most tightly muzzled.

Thus sorely, alas! he was troubled and tried,
Till one of the girls sat close by his side,
And gave him a look that was wooing.
He remembered no longer a word that was said,
But only a dress that was colored with red,
Was floating and fluttering all through his head,
Till he did'nt know what he was doing.

Old Time winged on 'till the hour grew late,
And the fire was getting quite low in the grate,
And surely 'twas time to be starting.
The snuff on the candle grew long and slim,
The grease ran over the candle-stick's rim,
And spluttered, and flickered, and then grew dim,
But John never thought of departing.

At last the Jew was wearied outright,
So he took up his hat and bade them good night,
And John made as if he was going.
But the Jew waited out on the steps 'till he froze
A piece of one heel and three of his toes,
And swore a whole chapter of terrible oaths,
For 'twas blowing, and freezing, and snowing.

At last the Jew could stand it no more,
So he popped his head in through the half-open door,
Crying, "John, what the de'il are you at?
"Why, damn it, you surely must want me to freeze,"
"Come, Jew," answered John, "keep *cool* if you
please,
"For you know that to-night there's a terrible breeze,
"And I must tie on my hat.

"Oh, faith," said the Jew, "I now smell the rat;
" 'Tis your head that needs anchor instead of your
hat,
"For I see you are dizzy and reeling.
"Do not, my dear fellow, be frightened nor start,
" 'Tis a gizzard affection right close to the heart—
"Three times in my life I played the same part,
"And I felt this very same feeling."

But, alas! 'twas a sorrowful night for poor John,
For all of his former fine spirits were gone,
And he joked no more with his fellows.
His face grew long and his cheeks grew thin,
His smile was a mournful cadaverous grin,
And he looked like a Monk doing penance for sin,
And sighed like a blacksmith's bellows!

'Tis a long and a tragical story to tell
What happened poor John;—and I guess 'tis as well
To wait 'till his grief has subsided;
And then he will finish this sorrowful tale,
In a song like the moan of the midnight gale,
And then the verses shant happen to fail
To be neatly arranged and divided.

John Fortney's Courtship.

A SERIO-COMIC POEM.

CANTO SECOND.

John Fortney grew thinner and leaner each day,
His flesh from his bones all wasted away,
And his eyes were sunken and red too.
His friends besought him to seek for relief;
They told him he'd certainly die of his grief,
And it seemed that this was his own belief,
For he moaned and nodded his head too.

His books which had formerly been his delight,
And beguiled him many a live long night,
Now lay about scattered and dusty.
And there lay in fragments, all over the floor,
His papers with doggerel scribbled all o'er,
Which oft in a fit of his passion he tore,
For he'd grown quite crabbed and crusty.

For a fortnight he shut himself up in his room,
And passed the whole time in lamenting his doom,
And nobody dared to enter.
Neither brother nor sister, nor any of kin,
Neither children nor cat nor dog came in,
Indeed for his dearest of friends 'twould have been
An exceedingly rash adventure.

The servant who knew not the state of his mind,
Came in on his regular morning, to find
His clothes to take to the washing.
John drew something out from under the bed,
And in less than a second the boot-jack sped
With a fearful whiz past the darkey's head—
The looking-glass terribly smashing.

The nigger could not grow pale with fright,
Nor his curly wool stand stiff upright,
But he did the best he was able.
'Twas frightful to see his eye dilate,
'Till the white grew large as a dinner plate,
Then made for the door, in a bee-line straight,
Upsetting both John and the table.

Fear lent him wings, and he'd need of them too,
For after him pitcher and wash-bowl flew,
And the nigger for once was'nt lazy.
The pitcher was large, and heavy and full,
But it mashed up fine on the darkey's skull;
The water ran down in streams from his wool,
And he tumbled down stairs roaring out like a bull,
That Fortney was drunk or crazy.

John closed the door with a violent slam,
And muttered out something that sounded like
damn,

Though he was'nt much given to swearing.
But forgetting himself in his passion he swore,
That the very next person that entered that door,
Should be served as he'd served the nigger before,
And would pay full dear for his daring.

He sat the whole day with his feet on the stove,
And wrote little verses addressed to *his love*,
Nor thought of his breakfast or dinner.
He thought he'd be willing to fare like the Jew,
And have his feet frozen stiff, purple and blue.
If he only could find out from some one that knew
What plan he should follow to win her.

He longed and he sighed to see her again,
But even the thought so excited his brain,
That it threw his heart all in a flutter.
Says he, I must gather up heart it is plain,
Or the people will certainly say I'm insane;
But he tried to muster his courage in vain,
For it melted down just like butter.

But Fortney, although in a terrible stew,
Had never forgotten his comrade, the Jew,
But grieved for his friend's disaster.
So he sent him a package of flaxseed meal,
For a poultice to lay on his frozen heel;
And for fear that his toes might swell up and beal,
Sent a box of the Hebrew Plaster.

Now the feet of the Jew were so swollen and sore,
That it pained him to put them down on the floor,

Neither boot nor shoe could be got on.

There he sat with his heels on a cushioned chair,

And his boots lay down in a corner there;

And even his slippers he could'nt wear,

For his feet were wrapped up in raw cotton.

Fat Molly.

Oh ! dont you remember Fat Molly, Old Chum,
Fat Molly that lived on the hill,
How lively and merry, and jolly Old Chum;
Yes, I love to think of her still.

Oh ! dont you remember her bosom Old Chum,
How it rose "like" mountains of snow;
For her low-necked dress
Left little to guess
Of the beauties that nestled below.

Oh ! dont you remember her hoops Old Chum,
That encircled her body around.
Full six feet wide
They spread on each side,
And covered abundance of ground.

Oh ! dont you remember her dress Old Chum,
How it hung in great folds at her feet;
While its long trailing skirt
Dragged down in the dirt,
And stirred up the dust on the street.

Oh ! dont you remember her ankles Old Chum,
What a classical form they possess'd;
Well did we suppose
That ankles like those,
Swelled out into limbs of the best.

Oh ! dont you remember her face Old Chum;
How it shone like the full round moon.
What a beautiful glow
Of health did it show,
As she blushed like the roses of June.

But change is the order of nature Old Chum,
Alas ! that such beauty should fade.
But time flies past,
And Molly at last
Is a withered-up, wrinkled old maid.

Her head has now grown quite gray Old Chum,
With its hairs thinly straggling around,
Like the stalks of old timothy hay, Old Chum,
As it lies scattered over the ground.

Her limbs are now shrivelled-up stems Old Chum,
And her skin is so withered and dry
That the fleas as they skip
O'er her boney old hip,
Fall down in its wrinkles and die.

Farewell to the Jew.

"Fare thee well," my bearded crony,
Thou hast left the single life;
Such a fit of love seized on thee
Naught could cure it but a wife.

Much as I regret to lose thee,
Still I would not have thee stay,
And my pen shall not abuse thee—
"Every dog must have its day!"

Yes, dear Jew, I'll miss thee sorely,
Blest with ev'ry social trait;
Would that I had gone before thee
To that blissful married state.

"Fare thee well," my brother-poet,
Many a happy time we've known
With lasses sweet, for well we know it
Tis not good to be alone.

No more the midnight hour shall find us
Roaring at the witty joke,
Leaving the ills of life behind us
In tobacco's soothing smoke.

No more our midnight mirth shall mingle,
Flowing with the happy cheer—
No more our jolly glasses jingle,
Foaming with the lager beer.

"Fare thee well," my jesting brother,
I'll not heave one parting sigh;
Be thou happy in another
Stronger, dearer, sweeter tie.

And since love hath tamed and won thee,
Caught thee in its tender noose,
May the yoke sit lightly on thee,
Never wishing to be loose.

May domestic peace be with thee,
Both together growing old,
And no smoking kitchen chimney
Ever cause thy wife to scold.

Farewell, Jew, until I meet thee,
Though to wed 'tis growing late,
Yet, ere long, I hope to greet thee
In the matrimonial state.

Kitty O'Clack.

Kitty O'Clack.

We feel proud of the opportunity of giving "KITTY O'CLACK" a start in the world. She has been a resident in "our neighborhood" for a long time, and we have no doubt but there are other localities in which her tongue has become equally familiar, and that many will recognize her as an old acquaintance! The history is well told—the verses jingle very like SAXE's "Miss McBRIDE," and Mr. DENIG, in our opinion, has succeeded in proving himself a "Poet" of rather uncommon ability, in the following production: [*Ed. Columbus Gazette.*]

KITTY O'CLACK.

Near the village of Dogtown, just within sight,
Is a long, narrow lane, leading off to the right,
And running some half a mile back—
Where its old, and stony, and grass-grown road
Is lost in the leaves, as it enters the wood—
Some mouldering logs still show where stood
The cabin of KITTY O'CLACK,

She wasn't a spinster past marrying grown;
Nor yet a poor widow who lived all alone—
But the wife of old Johnny, the Sexton;
Moreover, the "oldest inhabitant" said
That Kitty had thrice in her life been wed.
One husband alive, and the other two dead—
And she hoped still to bury the next one!

But perhaps the "oldest inhabitant" lied,
When he told how Kitty's first husband had died,
Far 'twas rather a strange narration;
He said that she took such a fiendish delight
In rating and scolding him day and night,
That at last he gave up the ghost from affright—
Or rather from pure vexation.

The second one meekly, submissively, bore
Her withering tongue for a year or more,
Then fled, leaving Kitty behind him;
He sailed for a while on the fathomless deep;
But the sound of her voice so troubled his sleep,
That at length he plunged in the sea with a leap—
For fear she would follow and find him.

Poor Johnny, the sexton, was husband the third;
For many long years her scolding he'd heard,
Till he trembled whene'er he look'd at her;
Full many a time in the grave-yard alone,
Did he lean on his mattock handle and groan,
And wish that the grave that he dug were his own—
So weary was he of her clatter.

Yes, Kitty O'Clack was a fearful scold—
Her tongue grew sharper as she grew old,
No mortal courage could stand it;
Her voice was shrill, and ringing, and clear,
'Twas a piercing terror to every ear—
She kept the whole village in trembling fear,
So terribly could she command it.

Her eyes were small, and searching, and keen,
A kind of a flashing, invisible green,
And snapped with malicious twinkle.
Her cheeks were a shade 'twixt yellow and buff,
The tip of her nose was browned with snuff,
Her forehead was low, and scaly, and rough
With many a frowning wrinkle.

Her chin turned fiercely up at her nose,
Till both seemed threat'ning and ready for blows,
For they shook with an angry rattle;
Full many a bitter, sarcastic word,
And even the "lie" had often been heard,
To pass between them, yet never occurred,
Such a thing as a regular battle.

One time-worn tooth, the last of his race,
Like a faithful sentinel, stood in his place,
Till age had rendered him hoary;
In many a fearfully raging storm
When the stoutest hearts had quailed with alarm,
He stood at his post, all fearless of harm,
Like a veteran bronzed with glory.

No children had Kitty, to keep her at home,
And so she made it her business to roam
All over the village at pleasure,
To gather the news wherever she went,
And surely no messenger ever was sent
So much on the work of his mission intent,
For gossip to her was a treasure.

Yes, a living budget of gossip was she,
With many exchanges, which came to her free—
No item could ever escape her;
The telegraph wires might fall with the gale,
And snows or floods might hinder the mail,
But Kitty had never been known to fail
With her regular daily paper.

And yet no paper had she, for indeed,
Poor Kitty had never been taught to read—
'T was mem'ry, alone, that availed her;
And where but a part of a story was known,
And the scandal had not sufficiently grown,
She'd finish it out with some of her own
Invention, which never had failed her.

She visited rich, and she visited poor,
And gathered a little at every door,
For gratuitous distribution;
She had learned all the secrets of every hearth—
What ev'ry man in the village was worth—
To every ambiguous marriage or birth
She could furnish the proper solution.

She knew that the Chilson's, who made such dis-
Had cheated their hired girl out of her pay, [play,
Till she left such a poor situation.

She knew that the Joneses were deeply in debt,
Their last new silks were n't paid for yet,
Besides, that Old Jones had gambled and bet
Till he'd squandered his whole plantation.

She knew that the haughty old Mrs. McCloud
Was a regular cod-fish, poor and proud,
Though it pained her exceeding, to say it;
She had but a single silk dress to her back,
And that an old changeable, colored up black;
For a patch, no matter how neat, left a track.
Which, scrutinized well, would betray it.

She knew that the Smiths had got into a snarl,
That Smith and his wife had a terrible quarrel—
For she never had rightly obeyed him.

She knew that the Johnson's, who lived in such state,
And pass'd themselves off for wealthy and great,
Had rented their service of glasses and plate
From the broker, but never paid him.

She knew the young lawyer who made himself free,
To visit the daughter of widow McGee,

For a rake, and a gay deceiver;

She said she would make it her business to watch,
Some scandalous information to catch

To blacken his name, and break off the match,

For she knew he would marry and leave her.

At the sewing society, Kitty was there

No matter when it assembled, or where;

And to every tea-party invited;

For none in the village so rash as to dare

To think of denying old Kitty her share;

They'd sooner have stirred up a grizzly bear

Than Kitty O'Clack should be slighted.

Then Kitty O'Clack was a host to take,

The superintendence of wedding or wake—

She was better than friend or relation—

For at seasons like these when chance would afford

Full many a dwelling old Kitty explored,

Each corner and cup-board her budget well stored,

With many a close observation.

She visited chamber, and parlor, and hall,
And much information she gathered from all
With an eager and glorious relish;
Down in the cellar kitchen she dived,
And learned how poorly some rich people lived;
And many things more which she firmly believed
Could be told without any embellish.

She looked into pan, and kettle, and pot,
And there such information she got
As paid her for all her labors;
She peeped into bureau, and drawer, and chest,
And found that some people who seemed well dressed,
Had clothes that were patch'd and darn'd and press'd
No better off than their neighbors.

And many a soiled kitchen floor she had seen
In the houses of people considered clean,
That was greasy, and dirty, and sandy,
She found there were moths in carpets and rugs,
She found old bedsteads alive with bugs,
And what she had taken for vinegar jugs
She discovered smelt strongly of brandy.

Oh ! a regular carrion crow was she,
Whose element was putridity,
The carcass of lost reputation,
And where disease its infection had spread,
And others in fear and disgust had fled—
She sat by the side of the dying bed,
To gather some bad information.

Yes, Kitty could live on the air of death;
She loved the smell of a dying one's breath;
And many a person had wondered
At the grave-stone look and the spectral tread,
And the crocodile tears she freely shed,
As she glided about in the house of the dead
Whom in life she had bitterly slandered.

She was present when Gridley, the miser, died
And saw how he struggled, and groaned and sighed,
And raved about hidden treasure;
And then in the night, when the fever grew worse
He called for his gold, and called for his purse,
She was certain he died in a fit of remorse
After some villainous measure.

She had heard the last words of old Granny McCain,
Who lived in the hut at the end of the lane,
And was blamed for bewitching the cattle;
That Granny was leagued with the devil she knew,
For the night that she died, at a quarter past two,
The candle flared up, and then it burnt blue,
And the windows all shook with a rattle.

She had witnessed the last and tragical strife
Twixt drunken blacksmith George and his wife,
When he beat her until she had fainted.
And then, when she died from her bruises and fright,
He cut his own throat, such a horrible sight,
And his house ever since that terrible night
With ghosts and goblins was haunted.

Yes, Kitty O'Clack was a world of lore;
No library ever contained such store,
She was better than school or college:
What a pity it is, that time and age
Should ever remove from its earthly stage,
Such a living volume, whose every page
Was teeming with useful knowledge.

But time rolled on, and Kitty grew old;
And her withering limbs grew feeble and cold,
And death was longing to have her;
But year after year old Kitty still stayed,
For the grim old Spectre himself was afraid—
And if statagem wouldn't avail him, he said,
He must let her live on forever.

But a murky night, as he rode through the air,
When there wasn't a glimmer of moon or star—
And the heavens were shrouded in black,
He peeped in her cabin door as he passed,
And found the old Jezebel slumbering fast,
So he mustered up desperate courage at last,
And he nabbed old Kitty O'Clack!

Then deep in the earth a grave was made
By Johnny, the Sexton, for that was his trade,
And he sang as he dug and quarried;
Then he whistled a lively jig, it is said,
As he heaved in the dirt with his shovel and spade,
And danced on the grave when the slab was laid,
For Kitty O'Clack was buried!

A SPIRITUAL EPITAPH ON JOE MARTIN.

Here lies Joe Martin who in life
Had flow of spirits glad,
Of Spirits which were always good,
When spirits could be had.

But such a flow of spirits high,
By spirits caus'd to flow,
Were quite too spiritual for
The spirit of poor Joe.

For so much spirits had at length
Got settled in his clay,
His peaceful spirit took offence,
And spirited away.

And going through the spirit land,
His spirits well nigh sank,
For still—though spirits plenty here,
No spirits here were drank.

And while he here lamenting stood,
With spirits drooping low,
His troubled spirit thus broke forth
“In eloquence of woe.”

O river Styx wert thou made up
Of Alcoholic swill,
I'd lay forever on thy banks,
And suck it through a quill.

DAVID BLACK,

AND HIS SON

RICHARD.

David Black,
AND HIS SON
RICHARD.

In England's merry land, there lived
Some sixty-five years' back;
A man of many wondrous traits,
Whose name was David Black.

Now David was an English 'squire—
Besides, the story ran,
He had been in his early days,
A very wealthy man.

He owned his manor with its fields—
Its num'rous tenements;
He had his servants, and his hounds,
And his long roll of rents.

He owned his horses and his coach,
In which he oft did ride,
With the ancestral coat of arms,
Emblazoned on its side.

He owned full many a heavy share
In various kinds of stocks,
In railroads, factories and banks;
In shipping, and in docks.

He often ventured very deep
In speculation's schemes,
And waked with many a heavy loss,
From its exciting dreams.

In sporting too, he did indulge,
Especially the race;
The race course was of course for him,
A most beguiling place.

In p'aying billiards, David Black
Possessed a wide-spread fame,
For, he was never known to lose
One solitary game.

He struck the ball with such a skill,
That made it take a range,
Which pocketed the player's balls,
And pocketed their change.

In rolling ten-pins too, he had
The way that always wins,
No man could roll with David Black
That ever stood on pins.

So when he entered on the game,
The players looked for squalls,
It made them roll their staring eyes,
To see him roll his balls.

At cards he was a very trump,
As all his comrades knew,
For he was up to ev'ry trick
That players ever do.

Among them he was ranked a *king*,
Though often he was *knave*,
For in his turn to act the *deal*,
He took more than he gave.

So quick his nimble fingers flew
In shuffling well the pack,
No matter how the cards were cut,
He turned himself a Jack.

Old Sledge was David's fav'rite game,
But he was fond of loo,
And when he took a hand at whist,
All honors were his due.

He played at poker, brag or bluff,
At faro he would stake
So recklessly, that when he won
The bank would often break.

He loved the social circle—yet,
Did not to drink incline,
Though sometimes in his buoyant hours
He took a drop of wine.

At early dawn when he awoke,
He took a little grog—
As he was wont to say in joke,
To clear away the fog.

At breakfast time his appetite
Would oft incline to fail,
So just to set his stomach right,
He took a mug of ale.

Twixt breakfast and the dinner hour—
Say half-past ten o'clock,
He felt quite weak, and took a glass
Of good Old London Dock.

And then at twelve, he must prepare
His stomach for a lunch,
And so he made him up a glass
Of Irish whiskey punch.

Whilst eating dinner, he would take
A glass or two of port,
Or burgundy, or rhenish wine,
Or something of the sort.

Then after dinner when he felt
His stomach was oppressed,
He took a brandy-smash or two,
To make his food digest.

And then if in the afternoon,
He felt a little dull,
He had some fine Old Scheidam Schnapps,
Of which he took a pull.

To make his evenings pass away
With smooth and happy cheer,
He talked and smoked, and then he soaked
His porous skin with beer.

For fear the lager would affect
His stomach, or his head,
He took a glass of Holland gin,
Before he went to bed.

And if he wakened in the night—
As was often the case,
He kept some Old Jamaica Rum,
In a convenient place.

All these he drank for medicine,
But said when he was dry,
That nothing ever quenched his thirst,
But genuine Old Rye.

He drank when it was very cold,
Or when it was very hot—
He drank when he had much to do,
And drank when he had not.

He drank when it was very dry,
Or when 'twas very wet;
He drank sometimes to cool him off—
Sometimes to make him sweat.

Sometimes he took a drink because
He didn't feel quite well,
And then again, he drank because—
In fact he could'nt tell.

He drank when e'er he went abroad,
And when he staid at home;
He drank when e'er he chanced to meet
Some good old College chum.

He drank too, when he felt himself
A little out of trim,
He drank too when he met a friend,
Or when a friend met him.

He drank when friends came in to see,
And drank whilst they did stay,
And then he took another drink,
Before they went away.

He drank before his morning walk,
To make him fresh and strong—
And very fearful of fatigue,
He took a flask along.

David could drink whene'er he would,
And would whene'er he could,
Liquor of almost any kind,
Whether 'twas bad or good.

Good liquor he would always praise,
The bad he'd always blame,
But good or bad, no matter which,
Its fate was all the same.

David preferred the old of course,
As judges always do;
But when he could not get the old,
He worried down the new.

Old rot-gut, dead shot, tangle leg—
Just smoking from the still;
E'en rifle whiskey he could drink—
Expressly made to kill.

But David Black was always thought
To be a sober man,
Though some mischievous persons said,
That David loved his dram.

No, David was no drinking man;
For he was never known
To drink but when in company,
Or when he was alone.

But times and seasons take a change,
As we, alas! may learn,
And fortune's wheel in going round,
Makes many a backward turn.

The markets had begun to feel
Three unproductive years,
All things grew scarce, and people then
Began to have their fears.

Hard times began to be the cry,
And things grew worse and worse,
Each one began to tighten up
The strings about his purse.

The crisis first began to tell
In speculators ranks;
Next in their turn, went by the board—
The doubtful, shaky banks.

Then larger banks began to quake—
Their discounts to curtail;
The merchants felt the pressure next,
And they began to fail.

The panic grew still more and more
Into a general smash,
And many a heavy house went down,
In that financial crash.

The pressure spread from cities large,
To every little town,
The price of gold kept going up,
While stocks were going down.

From bad to worse a thing of course,
The troubles soon had grown,
Till people who were not in debt,
Could scarcely hold their own.

Now, when a man of mod'rate means,
Cant pay for what he gets,
How is a person much involved,
To pay his many debts.

What many persons had supposed,
Was now indeed too true;
The cash affairs of David Black,
Were getting very blue,

Poor David sadly out of sorts,
Was in a fearful stew,
He could not meet his many notes,
As fast as they came due.

Grown careless in his later years,
He'd made investments rash,
Of which the income did'nt pay,
The taxes on his cash.

Besides, there was another cause,
Which troubled him the most,
He'd played a deeper game at cards—
And often times had lost.

Once fortune's fav'rite child he was—
Especially at play,
But now she served him scaly tricks,
In this, his later day.

In horses he had traded much,
And purchased blooded stock;
The famous nags of David Black,
Were once the country's talk.

But now his judgement had grown weak,
And came to such a pass,
That jockeys sadly cheated him,
And called him an old ass.

Of late his num'rous stalls contained
Cripples of ev'ry kind,
Wind-broken, ring-boned, spavined nags,
And many that were blind.

Now when a man goes down the hill,
Each one, (as people say,)
Gives him a kick as he goes past,
To help him on his way.

And so it was with David Black,
For he was growing old,
And evil people in their words,
Became a little bold.

They said that David drank too much,
And frequently got high;
They said he showed it in his face—
He showed it in his eye.

They said that drinking long and hard,
Had fuddled his old head;
They said he gambled late at night,
And then went drunk to bed.

They said—as gossips always do,
Who care not what they say,
That David Black was known to drink
Full twenty times a day.

They said that at the faro bank,
He'd squandered all his means,
That his estates were covered o'er
With mortgages and liens.

'Tis true he'd suffered heavy loss
In various kinds of banks,
The *faro bank* perhaps it was,
That played the roughest pranks.

But David Black had standing out,
Some very large amounts,
And now resolved to set about
Collecting his accounts.

He dunned his debtors, great and small,
But found that none could pay—
For most had run beyond their means,
And some had run away.

Poor David now began to fear—
To tremble and to quake,
And knew unless he got some help,
That he must surely break.

He tried to borrow of his friends,
But this he could not do,
They dunned him hard for former loans,
Instead of granting new.

In vain he tried to call their minds
To favors he had done,
Their memories grew very short,
For they could think of none.

He told them how on notes and bonds,
He'd often gone their bail,
They told him, that was no great risk,
He knew they would'nt fail.

He told them how he'd lent his hand,
To help them on to fame;
They answered with sarcastic grin,
“There's nothing in a name.”

Now David had a gen'rous heart,
And lib'ral hand at least,
And used to entertain his friends,
With many a costly feast.

Yes, friends were very num'rous then,
Archdeacon, 'squire and lord;
And many a 'poor relation too,
Regaled at David's board.

Poor erring man ! for all his faults,
They might have found excuse,
But where he looked for comfort now,
He only found abuse.

His favored friends deserted him—
Relations stood aloof,
Or if they had a word to say,
'Twas censure or reproof.

They told him with unfeeling jest,
That when he life began,
He had as good a chance as they,
“ Or any other man.”

They told him with a poor attempt,
At a most shameful pun,
He should have kept *far off* from banks,
As they had always done.

They said they did'nt wish to *brag*,
But always knew enough
In sailing down life's rugged stream,
To steer about a *bluff*.

They told him he had *run his course*
And if he lost the *race*,
He had the start of all of them—
The more to his disgrace.

The cup of pleasure he had drained,
And since the dregs had come,
Perhaps he might improve the taste,
By mixing in some *rum*.

They told him now to stick a *pin*,
Which he might see and learn,
That, *alleys* must be short indeed,
Which have no crooked turn.

But since it turned, there was for him
Some consolation *still*,
For he would have an easy road,
As it was all down hill.

And if he found it grieved his mind
With former friends to part,
Just take his *pocket flask* along,
To cheer his drooping heart.

It was too late to help him now,
For he must go at last,
They might have helped him once they said,
But now that day was past.

The drunkard's curse would do its work—
His children would be poor,
And some day, they would have to beg
Their bread from door to door.

All hope was gone, and David ceased
To struggle with his doom,
He sat resigned with folded hands,
And let the crisis come.

At first the story was supposed
To be some wicked joke,
For people could not well believe,
That David Black was broke.

But soon the rumor was confirmed,
And then the story flew,
That David Black was broken up,
And broke some others too.

Then creditors came rushing in—
Each anxious for his claim;
Notes, bills, and mortgages foreclosed,
And then the sheriff came.

Each urged his claim with all his might—
It was a desp'rate game,
And wo betide who had endorsed
His paper with their name.

Now long accounts of large amounts,
Full twenty years begun,
They knew that David Black was good
So they had let them run.

Then heavy notes for borrowed sums,
With int'rest on for years,
All added in, and running on,
For they had had no fears.

Old quitrents, mortgages and bonds,
Gone through so many hands,
That were the paper file spread out,
'T would cover half his lands.

Then suits at court, and judgement notes,
In storms of legal hail,
Then executions came at length,
And then the day of sale.

A fearful thing it is to feel,
The talons of the law;
No mercy does it show to him,
Who falls beneath its claw.

No bowels of compassion move,
For widow or for son,
Its iron heart can never feel,
The mischief it has done.

And thus it was in David's case;
His houses and his lands,
His cherished old paternal home,
Passed into other hands.

His goods and chattels all were sold,
Nor was the process stayed,
Until there was no more to sell,
Yet much remained unpaid.

With dissipation broken down,
His weak and tottering brain,
Almost succumbed beneath the stroke
Bordering on the insane.

With broken health, and spirit too,
He hung his troubled head;
And wished that he had ne'er been born,
And wished that he were dead.

But David had a loving wife,
Whose heart had ne'er grown cold,
Whose worth was more than all he lost,
Yes worth her weight in gold.

Now she possessed some small estates,
Held in her virgin name,
And these could not of course be touched,
By creditor or claim.

Some hundred pounds, by selling these,
She had at her command,
And with this wreck of better days,
They left their native land.

Borne on the rough Atlantic tide,
With tearful eyes they sailed,
Nor did they stop, until the shores
Of freedom's land were hailed.

There David Black, an altered man,
With his devoted wife,
Began the world anew, resolved
To lead a different life.

Three times in life they had been called,
A daughter's death to mourn.
But now to smooth declining years,
An only son was born.

It is indeed a great event
To greet a new born child,
The parents always weep for joy,
And all around go wild.

And so it happened with the Blacks,
When Richard came to light;
Unparalleled excitement reigned,
On that eventful night.

It happened in the night of course,
As such things mostly do,
For babies born in day-light, are
Comparatively few.

Three doctors in attendance there,
Two midwives and a nurse,
And twelve old women bustling round,
To make confusion worse.

Lights flit about from room to room,
And up and down the stair;
Towels, basins, cloths, and other things
Are carried here and there.

Then all the household gather round
The new born child to see,
And then a bounteous feast is spread,
With cordials wine and tea.

Then the old women hasten out,
The joyous news to tell,
That Mrs. Black has had a son,
And both are doing well.

A large, and well shaped child he was,
And seemed robust and hale,
Full sixteen pounds at birth he weighed,
Exactly by the scale.

His father's very image too,
So all the neighbors said,
And then his mother's glossy hair,
Covered his infant head.

His hair of course was very *black*,
And his two piercing eyes
Were black as charcoal—black as jet—
And of a wondrous size.

His broad and deep and heaving chest,
In graceful curve did rise,
And then his legs were thick and strong,
Especially the thighs.

His belly too, was very round,
To portliness inclined;
And then his back and other parts—
But these we'll leave *behind*.

Now Richard Black, soon grew to be
A stout and lively child;
And with him, both his parents oft
The weary hours beguiled.

They loved to hear his infant laugh—
His prattle and his noise;
And see him scatter o'er the floor,
His trinkets and his toys.

With joy they saw his first attempts,
Without a hand to bear—
To stand alone upon the floor,
And walk from chair to chair.

With joy they heard his childish voice,
In rude attempts at speech,
And plied him well with baby talk,
His little tongue to teach.

But time rolled on, and Richard learned
To talk, and walk and run,
And many little childish tricks—
And much mischievous fun.

He took his father's fine new hat,
To use it as a hod;
Then built a house of costly books,
And plastered it with mud.

And then he stole his father's wig,
Of thick and curly hair,
And glued it on the cat with tar,
Then called the cat his bear.

He poured a crock of foaming yeast
Into the housemaid's bed,
He said he thought 'twould make her rise,
Just like it did the bread.

The house dog too, could tell a tale,
That is, his tail could tell—
Of old tin pans and coffee pots,
Tied to it for a bell.

But time flies past, and soon the child
Grows up to be a boy,
And all the little childish sports,
He ceases to enjoy.

Now Richard was a manly boy
In all his youthful plays,
But like too many of his age,
He had some vicious ways.

For breaking windows, killing birds—
Young Richard Black was known;
No boy in all the neighborhood
Could fling so straight a stone.

In depredations, made by boys—
Young Richard was the life,
And many a watermelon patch,
Was slaughtered by his knife.

In robbing apple-orchards too,
He led the brave advance,—
For none could jump a wider ditch,
Or scale a higher fence.

And if pursued by man or dog—
However swift or fleet,
The way that Richard showed his heels,
Was a most wondrous *feat*.

In wrestling, boxing, playing ball.
He had a schoolboy's fame;
For he could beat the very best,
And give him half the game.

But these bright days soon pass away,—
For life is but a span,
And Richard Black, grows up to be
A large and strong young man.

But scarcely had young Richard Black
Quite into manhood grown,
When both his aged parents died,
And left him all alone.

His grief was very long and deep,
But this was useless now,
His father had "laid down the hoe,"
And he must take the plough.

As Richard was the only heir,
Of course they left him all—
The farm on which he had been raised,
But that was very small.

Besides the land was very poor—
Stones almost hid the soil;
No one could make a living there,
But by incessant toil.

The house was getting very old,
And needed much repair,
But this of course could not be done,
Without the means to spare.

The timbers of the old log barn
Were crumbling with decay,
Its sinking roof, and leaning sides,
Were slowly giving way.

Gates off the hinge, and fences down,
Neglect on every hand;
Wild chamomile, and mullein stalks
Were spreading o'er the land.

David lay sick, long ere he died,
And gave his son the sway,
But Richard had a turn of mind,
That did'nt lean that way.

He said he hated farming work,
Besides, he often said,
That he would find some other way,
To get his daily bread.

He said that he should sell the farm,
And then he'd move away,
For he had tried it hard enough,
And could'nt make it pay.

He said he would'nt sell on time,
For note, with bond or bail,
But offered it extremely low,
For cash upon the sale.

The terms of sale were posted up,
At corners round the town;
The purchaser pays one-half up,
And planks the other down.

But if these terms seemed very hard,
And more than they could stand,
He'd take one half in ready cash,
And 'tother half in hand.

The farm however soon was sold,
And went extremely low,
For Richard said, the cursed thing
At any price should go.

So when the thing was done, he drew
One long relieving breath,
And said, the man who bought that farm,
Will surely starve to death.

Now in New England—'tis almost
A universal rule,
That when a man is out of work,
He takes to teaching school.

So Richard got him up a school,
Which soon was very large,
Some seventy-five or eighty youths
Were in his precious charge.

He knew he was not fit to teach,
He knew that it was wrong,
But thought that he would try his luck,
Perhaps he'd get along.

The day came on at length, that he
Must stand before the class,
And as his head was short of brains,
He put on all his brass.

The pupils in arithmetic
Came forward on the floor,
A fearful host of slates it was,
With figures covered o'er.

Now Richard scratched his troubled head,
The problems to explain;
He tried to recollect the rules,
But this was all in vain.

The rules he got most sadly mixed,
For when he multiplied,
He blundered on division's rule,
Which made the sum divide.

He next endeavored to subtract,
His luck was just as bad;
Addition's rule came to his aid,
And made the total add.

He tried to work the problem out,
The answer would not come,
Says he, before that sum I tried,
I thought that I was *some*.

But now I find it is not so—
Convinced beyond a doubt,
I cannot teach arithmetic,
So that I've *figured* out.

The grammar class next took the floor,
Their exercise to parse,
He was confused enough before,
But now he grew much worse.

In vain he called the parts of speech,
To order, in his mind,
But not a single one, could he
In his confusion find.

Nouns, pronouns, prepositions, verbs—
All fled in wild dismay;
No adjective nor article
Could he compel to stay,

Passive, and even neuter verbs,
Which always were at rest,
Took on the legs of active form,
And vanished with the rest.

An interjection was at last
By tears induced to come,
Alas! said he, my speech is gone,
I surely must be dumb.

And I would now bewail in words,
That e'er I thought to teach,
But cannot find expression now,
As I have lost my speech.

Geography came next in turn,
With book and atlas spread,
To learn where rivers took their rise,
And where the countries laid.

This science he had never learned,
And was completely lost,
For on the map he could not tell
An ocean from a coast.

He lost his latitude entire—
Completely at a stand.
For like one driven out to sea,
He could'nt see the land.

He could not get it through his wool,
(Though he had often read,)
How that a river's mouth, should be
The farthest from its head.

Besides it sorely puzzled him,
To find the reason why,
That rivers always emptied out,
And yet were never dry.

Another thing he'd studied much,
But could not understand,
Wherefore the sea had num'rous arms,
But never had a hand.

He'd read in books, where points of land,
Ran out into the sea,
And wondered since it had'nt legs,
How that could ever be

He'd heard the world was girdled by
The Equinoctial line,
If that was all rolled up, said he,
Lord what a ball of twine.

He'd often heard of doubling capes,
And sailing round the horn,
It is said he unto himself
Some monster unicorn.

Van Dieman's Land was, he supposed,
Where none but demons dwell,
Its atmosphere must have said he,
A most sulphureous smell.

So Richard sent away the class,
And turned himself about,
Says he, I've finished teaching school,
For I have fizzled out.

Now Richard, though not learned in books,
Was an ingenious man.
Could turn his hand to any thing,
As yankees often can.

Some other mode of getting on,
He set about to choose,
Reflected long, and then resolved
To go to making shoes.

My native town is not the place,
Said Richard to begin,
And so he gathered up his traps,
And traveled down to Lynn.

Now boots and shoes are made in Lynn,
On an extensive scale,
Then sent away in large amounts,
For south or western sale.

But where an article is made
On purpose for to sell,
It follows as a thing of course,
'Tis not done very well.

And thus it is with boots and shoes,
Designed for jobbing trade.
No difference what stuff is used,
Nor how the work is made.

Coarse boots are made of damaged stuff,
'Tis always understood,
The insole filled with rags and chips'
The outsole made of wood.

Fine boots and women's wear, are made
Of cowhide split in half—
Of sheepskin, dogskin, hogskin, horse,
Or anything but calf.

So Richard rented him a shop,
And purchased bench and tools,
And took in boots and shoes to make,
According to the rules.

For many months he persevered,
To peg and sew and stitch;
And had he been contented then,
He might have ended rich.

But while he whistled at his work,
He had some sober views,
It seemed to him like coming *down*,
To go to making shoes.

As with the lap-stone on his knee,
He hammered out the sole,
He thought until his feelings got
Worked up beyond control.

His troubled thoughts tumultuously
Like heaving billows roll,—
Alas said he, that soul like me
Should hammer out a sole.

The upper ten should be my place,
That truth I feel and know,
But upper leather's company,
For me is far too low.

I never thought it would be so,
But *sew* it is I see;
I feel I'm at the lowest peg,
Whilst pegging on my knee.

I cannot sit contented here,
With these thoughts in my head;
Besides, I'll *wax* no wiser, while
I stay at *waxing* thread.

And as my name is Richard Black,—
'Tis very plain to see;
That if I stay at making shoes,
A *shoe-black* I must be.

Oh what a galling thought it is,
One's poverty to feel;
Its iron *heel* is on me now,
While nailing on this *heel*.

So Richard's pride now *bristled* up,
Till all restraint was past;
And down he threw the *lasted* boot,
Says he, this is the *last*.

He cleared the tools from off his bench,
And sat it by the wall,
Then in his apron packed his kit,
Knives, pinchers, brads and *awl*.

He laid his leather on a shelf,
A very wise device
It was, to keep it from the reach
Of hungry rats and mice.

He washed the wax from off his hands,
And said, without a doubt—
This thing of making shoes—for me,
Is totally played out.

Richard, whilst on his father's farm,
Had tinkered a good deal
At sundry little jobs of work—
In iron and in steel.

Deliberating in his mind,
What next should be his course,
It very soon occurred to him,
That he could shoe a horse.

He'd try the blacksmith trade at once,
And went without delay,
And hired himself to blow and strike,
For wages by the day.

His wages which at first were small,
Grew gradually higher,
And under such encouragement,
He worked a year entire.

The little jobs he'd done at home,
Were short and easy done,
But now, (to use a workman's phrase,)
He worked from sun to sun.

He'd often said he loved to hear
The anvil's merry ring;
But now to ring it all the day,
Was quite a diff'rent thing.

With blistered hands he wielded oft,
A sledge of monstrous size,
And then before the furnace fire,
He scorched his tender eyes.

The coal-dust settled on his skin,
In ev'ry pore and crack,
His face which formerly was fair,
Was fairly turning black.

Then Richard Black said to his Boss,
This fact I plainly see;
That such a hard and dirty trade,
Will never do for me.

The bellows I have blown so long,
That I am out of *breath*;
Of welding *tire* for wagons too,
I'm almost *tired* to death.

No longer shall I blow and *strike*,
But now I'll *strike* a blow—
That is, I'll *strike* for other parts,
It *strikes* me I shall go.

Dear Boss I grieve to part with thee,
For truly do I feel,
My heart is *welded* unto thine,
Like *iron* unto *steel*.

But yet, I feel that I must leave,
I hope 't will be no loss,
So fare thee well, old *Leatherlungs*,—
For thus he called his Boss.

Forge out thy *chain* of destiny,
Thou man of noble worth;
And ever may affection's fire
Burn brightly on thy *hearth*.

Perchance I ne'er may see thee more,
So now a last good-bye;
And then he wiped a tear, and then—
A cinder from his eye.

Now Richard Black had often thought,
Of emigrating west;—
And thinking well the matter o'er,
Concluded it was best.

So thitherward he bent his steps,
With dreams of future wealth;
Says he, I'll make my fortune yet,
If I should keep my health.

He wandered o'er the Western States,
And went from town to town,
Till in the state of Illinois,
At length he settled down.

In quite a lively little place,
He chose him an abode,—
Cross Roads, the place was called, because
Road intersected road.

These roads he saw, were traveled much,
And said, I know full well,
This is the very place for me
To open a hotel,

He purchased him a corner lot,
Right on the public square,
And while he built a house on this,—
Built castles in the air.

Those were the busy stirring days,
Of City building times;
A man could build on credit if
He did not "have the dimes."

Thus Richard built him up a house,
With many an ample room,
'T would entertain a hundred guests,
If they should ever come.

Oft did he chuckle o'er his luck,
And say, "I've drawn a prize,"
This property will make me rich,
If property should rise.

And rise it must in course of time,
For every body said,
This town would be the central point,
For all the country trade.

The town was laid out very large,
With streets and alleys wide,
Square after square of vacant lots,
Stretched far on ev'ry side.

Long rows of stakes drove in the ground,
Marked out each future street,
Where grass ere long would cease to grow—
Destroyed by human feet.

The future Court-house here would stand,
Just where this boulder lay,
And here the school house would be built,
No very distant day.

The market-house too, had its site,
And churches by the score;
And here the county jail would swing
Its massive frowning door.

Here public parks, and avenues
Laid out with lib'ral hand,
Which could be well afforded, for
There was abundant land.

A town-plat done in indian ink,
Which looked exceeding well,
With all its streets and numbered lots,
Hung up in Black's Hotel.

This soon would be a bus'ness town,
So every body thought,
Who ventured here his lot to cast,
And buy himself a *lot*.

But other towns sprung up around,
Each backing up its claim,
With offers and inducements great,
To ev'ry one who came.

And soon our little cross road town,
Had passed its zenith day,
For travel seemed almost to cease,
Or take some other way.

Three hundred souls the town contained,
When things took such a turn,
Nor did the number now increase,
Except by children born.

Town lots no more were in demand,
So rapidly they fell,
That they were put at half their price,
And yet they would'nt sell.

Once more the hopes of Richard Black,
Like frosted blossoms fell;
His was a "one horse" tavern now,
Instead of a hotel.

Yet Richard did not give it up,
Says he, I'll persevere,
I may not make my fortune, but
I'll make my living here.

For I do most sincerely love
This keeping a hotel,
It is an easy—lazy life,
And suits me passing well.

No more I'll travel o'er the world,
In search of wealth, said he,
But I will set me down and wait,
Until it comes to me.

There on his porch from day to day,
The lazy landlord sat,
Though growing^r poorer every day,
Became extremely fat.

No longer shall I fret said he,
If things go right or wrong,
I know the world in going round,
Must carry^r me along.

He took some boarders by the week,
And others by the day,
And then at times, a traveling guest
At Richard's house would stay.

But as his portliness increased,
Still lazier he grew,
Till he at length no longer wished
For anything to do.

In servant's hands he gave the charge—
All things were in their care,
While Richard smoked his pipe of peace,
Upon his easy chair.

With village politicians he
Would argue by the hour,
And then to lounging loafers tell
His stale old stories o'er.

But whilst he took an easy time,
And freed himself from care,
Things soon began to manifest
The signs of wear and tear.

The costly oil-cloth on the hall,
Once bright and many-hued,
Was soiled and torn, and worn in holes,
And covered o'er with mud.

The large and spacious dining room,
Which once had walls of white,
Had now a dingy smoky hue,
That struggled with the light.

It had that mixed ambiguous air,
Of non-descriptive smells,
That one can always recognize
In second class hotels.

It seemed to be the lingering ghosts,
Of ev'ry by-gone dish,
Of coffee mixed with burning meat,
Of onions and of fish.

And then a whiff of mouldy bread,
Came floating on the breeze;
Then roaches mixed with rancid lard,
Cabbage, and rotten cheese.

The mouldy, mousey, musty smell
Of cupboards in the wall;
Dead fumes of old tobacco pipes
Mixed in, and over all.

The table cloth which once was white,
And showed each folded crease,
Was now a soiled and wrinkled rag,
Covered with spots of grease.

Large maps upon its surface spread,
Of continent and sea,
The stains of gravy broth and soup,—
Of coffee and of tea.

And when the dishes could no more,
The many grease spots hide,
The lazy housemaid turned it o'er,
And used the other side.

It had that stifling putrid smell,
Which ev'ry sailor knows,
Of emigrants long out at sea,
Without a change of clothes.

But entering the kitchen door,
The place at last was found,
That might with honest truth be called,
Pure democratic ground.

Here tubs and pails and dinner pots,
And pots of *low degree*,
Felt sociable, and quite at ease
In kettle's company.

The pot did not call kettle black,
Nor kettle reflect on pot,
For no reflecting surfaces,
Had either of them got.

Here underneath the cooking stove,
The bread and cakes, and pies
Were placed, to get a gentle warmth
And make them quickly rise.

Here lay the household dog and cat,
In this their snug retreat,
With boots and shoes, and dirty socks,
Drawn off from dirty feet.

And here that instrument of death,—
The fine tooth comb was found,
With the slain victims of its wrath,
In numbers lying round.

Pale, bloodless, lifeless—flattened scales,
Dead skins of creeping cattle;
The doughchest's lid, turned upside down,
Had been the field of battle.

Thus Richard's tavern moved along,
As day succeeded day;
And seldom any thing disturbed
The tenor of its way.

But ev'ry chapter has its end,
Let it be e'er so long,
And things the best of human make,
Will oftentimes go wrong.

No temper so phlegmatic but
It sometimes will grow warm,
As oft times o'er the smoothest sea,
There comes a fearful storm.

'T was on a sultry summer day,
About the end of June,
That Richard settled in his chair,
To doze the afternoon.

The daily coach in passing through,
Drove up to Richard's door;
'T was strange, as this had not been done,
For many months before.

It was an interesting thing,
Which stirred up half the town,
To see a stranger stop at Black's,
And set his baggage down.

He was a very well dressed man—
Commanding in his air;
With very long mustache and beard,
And long and curling hair.

His coat was of the finest cloth,
A gay and flashey vest,
And pantaloons the latest style,
Made of the very best.

A massive watch of finest gold,
With heavy golden chain,
And spectacles with golden rims,
And golden-headed cane.

His trunk was large, and heavy too,
For this the servants told,
And soon 't was whispered round about,
That this was filled with gold.

He was a very quiet man,—
Peculiar in his way,
About the news and common things,
He had'nt much to say.

He said he was an only heir,
With wealth at his command,
And wished to travel through the west,
And speculate in land.

He said he meant to stay some weeks,
To see what he could do,
And if he liked the country round,
He'd buy a farm or two.

He had abundant means to pay,
For bedding and for board,
And wished to have the very best,
The tavern could afford.

Richard rigged up his largest room
In elegant repair,
And hoped that his distinguished guest,
Would find it pleasant there.

His private table he must have,
With many a costly dish—
The choicest parts of beef or fowl—
Of turtle and of fish.

Domestic meats for him he said,
Had grown a little tame,
And so he ordered up each day,
Some rare and costly game.

For breakfast he was very fond,—
Of oysters, eggs and tripe;
At supper time, his fav'rite dish
Was woodcock, quail or snipe.

Wild turkey, flanked by canvass backs
For dinner he would take,
Lobsters, sardines, and venison,
With mutton chop and steak.

He ordered up imported wines,
Of ev'ry foreign brand,
Which soon exhausted all the stock,
That Richard had on hand.

Baskets of treble X champaigne,
Were ordered by the post;
Just charge it in the bill he said,
No matter for the cost.

Thus things went on for many weeks,
And ev'ry thing was charged;
Until at length the stranger's bill
Was very much enlarged.

Now Richard Black grew very tired,
In waiting for his pay,
If he is very rich said he,
Then why this long delay.

Though Richard was not prone to be
Suspiciously inclined,
Yet now some wondering doubts began
To cross his honest mind.

So he resolved that very day,
To keep a good lookout,
And find out where the stranger went,
And what he was about.

Soon as his guest had sauntered out,
As he was wont to do;
Our landlord followed on behind,
And kept him in his view.

O'er hill and dale he followed on,
Nor stopped to drink or rest;
Whilst Richard more uneasy still,
Hard on his footsteps pressed.

For many a long and weary mile,
He followed on his track;
For now he very plainly saw,
He was not coming back.

Richard was very slow to wrath
Without sufficient grounds,
But when he got his temper up,
It went beyond all bounds.

His anger burned within like fire,
Besides the day was hot,
And Richard's wrath had now increased
His walk into a trot.

He puffed and blowed for lack of breath,
Whilst streams of scalding sweat
Ran down from every open pore,
Till ev'ry rag was wet.

Richard was very fat indeed,
And very short of breath,
But vowed he'd catch the swindling thief,
If it should cause his death.

Onward he labored heavily,
Despising heat and dust,
Anger had fired him up with strength,
And have him now he must.

All kinds of smothered oaths he swore,
Of vengeance as he ran,
That he should die by ev'ry death,
That ever killed a man.

He'd horse-whip, cudgel—hammer him
Till he was black and blue;
He'd cut the rascal's lying throat—
He'd cut his heart in two.

He'd break his head and all his bones,
If he could once be caught,
Or if he showed the slightest fight,
He'd shoot him on the spot.

Ten minutes now behind the time,
He reached the railroad town;
For just as he was coming in,
The train was passing down.

In quick and breathless haste he learned,
The fugitive was gone,
Just as the train was moving off,
The rascal clambered on.

Full seven hours must now elapse,
Before the evening train;
To wait for it and follow him,
Would surely be in vain.

He hired a horse and buggy then,
And paid extremely high;
No matter for the cost, said he
I'll have him now or die.

Next town they make a change of cars.
And stop an hour to dine.
So if this horse can make the time,
The rascal will be mine.

A heavy shower came pouring down,
And wet him to the skin;
But though it cooled him off without,
His anger burned within.

Away he dashed with reckless speed,
Along the country road,
Until his horse's flying heels
Bespattered him with mud.

Volleys of dreadful oaths he swore,
And lashed his foaming steed,
And tried to urge him faster still,—
Though at his utmost speed.

At length the station heaves in sight,
He hears the whistle's scream,—
The rumble of the distant cars,
And sees the fleecy steam.

And now he plies the lash again,
Till with one fearful bound,
The axletree is snapt in two,
And he is on the ground.

He left his buggy in the road,
Almost a perfect wreck,
Then tore the harness off his horse,
And jumped upon his back.

He lashed and kicked his jaded nag,
To put forth all his nerve,
But just to see the hindmost car,
Departing round a curve.

No word escaped his quiv'ring lips,
His nerves were all unstrung,
For anger choked his trembling voice,
And paralyzed his tongue.

He did not swear nor tear his hair,
Nor curse his luckless fate,
No words could do him justice now,
The subject was too great.

Homeward he went with heavy heart,
But with a lightened purse,
Which had to pay for buggy broke,
Besides a crippled horse.

He opened up the stranger's trunk,
To see what he could find,
For sure, thought he, in such a haste
He left his clothes behind.

But now his wrath fired up again,
At this last shameful trick,
All that the heavy trunk contained,
Was cornhusks, stones, and brick.

He telegraphed to ev'ry point
To have the rascal caught,
And waited long, but never heard
Whether he was or not.

For many months he went about,
With sad and lengthened face;
Full fifty pounds of flesh he lost,
In that exciting race.

He swore by all the holy saints,
And ev'ry thing profane,
No man that ever walked in boots,
Should serve him so again.

He took this oath and wrote it down,
And keeps it sacred still;
No man shall stay a day with me,
Before he pays his bill.

And here we part with Richard Black,
Where he intends to stay;
And here perhaps you'll find him still,
If you should pass that way.

But if you wish to stop with him
There is no earthly chance,
But just to ask him for your bill,
And pay it in advance.

THE END.





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